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BRITISH PARTIES: SOME REFLECTIONS ON THEIR HISTORY

KEITH FEILING

FOR some three hundred years now party has been an established element in British government, loose and disorganized enough if measured by modern standards, but real in fact as early as the memorable year 1641, and from the Restoration onwards hardening slowly into continuous, though persistently varying, groups. If good and patriotic men frowned upon it as faction and Marlborough spoke of the "detested names of Whig and Tory," party nevertheless achieved fair discipline under Walpole and respectability under Burke. As a cross-section of British society it has become as vital a thing as a church in the sixteenth century, or a great feudal estate of the fourteenth, with laws and development of its own, a body of dogma, and roots in the earth.

The bare existence of party assumes the prior existence, at least in tolerable strength, of the common constitutional freedoms, of election, of speech, and of opinion. Not that these freedoms in themselves can guarantee an unrestricted progress of party. In every genuine federal government, for example, there are sub-divisions possessing an original purpose and authority which arrest the normal development of federal parties, and much the same is true of countries where some force in society, whether the army, a church, or bureaucracy, has solidified into an almost volcanic rock, as it did for instance in nineteenth-century France, making hard cores which the ordinary ebb and flow of party tides could never shake. Such laws as I suggest, then, will probably only apply to the history of party in Britain. There only perhaps a continuity unbroken by invasion or real revolution, a mature tradition of mercy or compromise, a concentration in a small area, a social system always one, as Bagehot wrote, of "removable inequalities," an ancient territorial scheme of election by single-member constituencies, have all converged to a great result, that party *is* the government. In no other country, we might claim, could a daughter of Oliver Cromwell have assisted at the coronation of George I, or Lord Goderich have served successively under Liverpool, Grey, and Peel, or Philip Snowden have died a peer. And all this with the paradoxical conclusion that party government is accepted as trustee for the country at large, and is duly rejected if it fails in that larger role.

Given such ruling conditions, British party evolution appears normally to obey this rule: that, as some new crisis breaks on the Left, whether a Wilkes, an American Revolution, Home Rule, or Socialism, the mass of the Left centre are driven back on the Right, whose faith and practice they then proceed to colour, modify, or transform. So Burke recast the party of Pitt, or Chamberlain that of Salisbury. Occasionally, by some freak of circumstance or ambition, the far Left and far Right may temporarily coalesce against the new centre, but not for long, and if the general rule be accepted, it follows that the normal British party is always historically a coalition, and the normal British politician himself a compromise. All of which helps to explain the power of those in the middle or in transition, and of the "silent" voter who writes so much to *The Times*.

Attempts are perpetually being made to give some permanent content or continuity to the terms Whig and Tory, Liberal and Conservative, though with mediocre success—to describe the Tories, for instance, as the party of old age, of the Established Church, of the Empire, of the liquor interest, or the stupid party, or the party of the land. A party that includes Canning and Peel, Salisbury and Disraeli, Bonar Law and Baldwin, cannot be all these things, and historians are forced back on a more minute examination of a party's genealogy.

The sources for our older party history are subject to the same vicissitudes as those for all political fact. Thus some fifty collections of those originally surveyed by the Historical Manuscripts Commission have been lost to sight. George Grenville's papers went to California; part of Shelburne's are in Canada and part in Michigan. Again, some ministers, Newcastle and Peel for example, preserved nearly everything; the elder Pitt and Carteret, very little; Baldwin, hardly anything at all. Vital facts, moreover, have been lost to memory or submerged in the modern books, such as Pitt's first offer of coalition to Charles James Fox in 1783. Some sources have been deliberately distorted—Danby's letters; some as deliberately destroyed—those of the early Bathursts; others, again, unduly manipulated—the parliamentary papers on the first Afghan war.

But the most primary material for party history, the writing of the leading actors, is charged with another more subtle, almost indecipherable, character. For it is written at every conceivable level, as it were, of motive and validity. With Clarendon it may be a solemn legacy of teaching for posterity. Bubb Dodington, on the other hand, paints his ignoble self for himself only. Shelburne, writing in retrospect, reveals embittered old age; the third Lord Holland writes with a lucent sincerity; Curzon, to vindicate to God and man the majesty of the motto "let Curzon hold what Curzon held." Disraeli would rather entertain than diagnose; there was a world of different value between the sword of Lloyd George and his pen; Macaulay and Neville Chamberlain speak right out to their family circle. And now that men have given up the keeping of diaries and almost ceased to write letters, and the telephone, the ministerial conference, the silent civil service, and bare Cabinet minutes have engulfed the record of political decision, the modern historian of party runs into an almost impenetrable thicket.

The press, taken by itself, will give him no assured assistance, for the distinction between news and views is not always well preserved, and he must be his own public relations officer. Yet sometimes, even of late years, an editor has been found who either spoke with a directly derived authority or whose own prestige actually determined party development; as the inner aims of Edward Grey or of Baldwin might be collected from a close study of the papers edited respectively by J. A. Spender and Geoffrey Dawson, or as the march of Liberalism may be predicted from C. P. Scott's editorship of the *Manchester Guardian.*

It might be thought, and is sometimes claimed, that party in Britain is a dwindling force, for just as in medieval England one institution after another "went out of Court" to be merged in the common law and parliamentary regulation, so great matters have tended to be put above or outside party, such as foreign affairs and defence, religious differences and Commonwealth relations. Even so, the history of Britain between the wars would show that not even those great rooms were swept and garnished. Party, besides, as the disdainful Chatham said, is a matter not only of measures but of men. In aristocratic politics, at least, the relation of personality to party has often been as great as that of cause to effect, and the "ifs," negations, refusals, or follies as fundamental as victories. If Canning had lived till the Reform Bill, if Bolingbroke had had character, if Gladstone had not equally disliked Chamberlain and democracy, if Dilke had kept his moral fame intact, and if Harcourt had kept his temper: questions like these, so easily to be multiplied, abound at the very crises of party history.

And since democratic politics reflect even more transparently the public working of private human beings, the same private temperaments and faculties and failings deflect or modify their pace and their growth. Once more there is the sense of indispensability to which most human beings are prone, the deep affections and instinctive dislikes, the wish to keep out a rival rather than a crude lust for power, the impossibility of separating public zeal from personal ambition. Indeed, the size of modern electorates, the power of the party machines, and the velocity of their turning wheels, multiply all the perennial chances of friction and have weighted still more the power of personality. For if there is any one clear major difference between the politics of Peel, or Gladstone, and those of the present century, it lies in this, that all this concentrated power bears on and upwards to the single figure of the Prime Minister, whose position has become Presidential, and in whom government finds its unity and motive force. Yet in his supremacy and its isolation, in the quasi-Byzantine figures who surround and guard him, so far removed from the great nobles who followed but often resisted Pitt and Peel, the downfall of his party may lie.

Party in the last resort is a corporate loyalty, most clearly preserved under the old conditions in the dynastic political houses of England. It may be studied, or could until German bombs destroyed it, in the library of Holland House, where Grey's letters and Hallam's *History,* and Macaulay's speeches were received or rehearsed. Or it may be read in Shelburne's home at Bowood, where the temple and the lake and the great trees brought some peace to that high-glancing, distorted mind; in the tawny stone of Althorp, where the treacheries of Sunderland and the campaign plate of Marlborough and the beauties of the Spencer women are all enshrined; or in the small house at Woolbeding in Sussex, full of relics and memories of Fox.

Those loyalties, older and more searching than the individuals who acknowledge them, have passed out of that phase, but are still as powerful as they were, in separate regions or in party's lower organisms of clubs, associations, and trade unions. The Liberal and Nonconformist tradition runs strongly in the west country and sections of the north, while the conservatism of Lancashire has different roots from that of the home counties, as different as the Labour of London is distinct from that of the Clyde. In the future scholarship of party history nothing will be so rewarding as regional study.

Representing, at his risk, all such loyalties, not excluding the tight loyalty of his own machine, the party leader, even a Prime Minister, has necessary limitations on his power. They are brought very near to him by the circle of his immediate lieutenants, the future or the ex-future Prime Ministers, who flock round him as he takes the first place, as around that Czar of Russia who, wrote an English eyewitness, entered on his coronation "preceded by his father's murderers and followed by his own." Nothing, however, is so common in politics as a false dawn, and nothing so haphazard as the clouds round the setting sun.

It is, as I think, by the study of its secondary figures that party history may often be best advanced: of men like John Robinson, North's secretary to the Treasury, or of Planta who was Canning's; of Goulburn who was Peel's favourite follower; or of that most curious blend of human beings who were borne up in the fiery chariot of Lloyd George. Such men received confidences of which, very often, they were inordinately proud. They stood one remove nearer than their chief to the native earth, and are often found to be more free of those suppressions and inhibitions that accompany and, as it were, muffle the holders of supreme power.

The gaps in the historiography, of British party at least, remain immense, though some could be satisfactorily filled. There is no classic history of the Whigs, and none of the Liberals; there is no biography of high rank, by modern standards, of Clarendon, Danby, Harley, Walpole, Dundas, John Morley, Bonar Law, or Ramsay MacDonald. Nor has account been taken here of the giant aberrations or non-predictable contingencies which have often diverted or actually paralysed our normal party working for a whole political generation, or longer, such as the Irish problem or two great wars—nor, again, of something still more disputable, of those winds of doctrine or ideology, native or foreign, which may, or may not, have come home to British voters and governed the polls.

At least the history of party calls for breadth of sympathy and something more discerning than a narrowly specialist eye, for as Harrington wrote long ago of government "you cannot plant an oak in a flower pot; it must have earth for its roots, and heaven for its branches."

COMUS ONCE MORE

A. S. P. Woodhouse

SINCE my "Argument of Milton's *Comus*"[1] appeared in these pages almost a decade ago, critics have been busy with the poem; and it seems not inappropriate to indicate for the reader where the principal contributions are to be found,[2] and then to go on to add a brief appendix to my former article.

The contentions of that article were: (i) that the argument of *Comus* presupposed an intellectual frame of reference commonly assumed in Milton's day, the assignment of all existence and experience to the level of nature or to the level of grace, which constituted for Milton two adjoining and even interpenetrating orders; (ii) that the argument ascended from nature (while dealing, like Book II of the *Faerie Queene,* with temperance and continence) through an area where nature and grace met (in what was for the poem the central virtue of chastity) up to the level of grace alone (where the highest virtue was symbolized by, but was not coterminous with, virginity); (iii) that if it were properly understood, and a correct meaning assigned to its allusion to the Garden of Adonis, the Epilogue became a key to the meaning of the poem (viewing the ascent from the vantage point of grace, whence the whole natural order appeared in its true light, and the dictates of "most innocent nature" were seen to be ratified before being transcended), and that this the Epilogue effected by retracing the ascent, rapidly and by means of symbols; and finally (iv) that, so understood, the argument of *Comus* was less austere, less purely negative, and less alien to the spirit of the masque, than had been commonly supposed.

A year or two later Mr. Tillyard, working independently, arrived at the conclusion that the Epilogue held an important key to the poem's meaning and that the allusion to the Garden of Adonis was central to the Epilogue. Thereafter, however, we diverged sharply. Mr. Tillyard maintained that when Milton added the allusion (some time before the edition of 1637) he altered the whole tendency of his argument, and that he did this because, in effect, he had bethought him that young ladies have a habit of getting married and that the Lady might well run true to type! To me, I confess, the reason assigned for Milton's second and better thoughts seems insufficient, and quite unnecessary. My concern was with the completed text, but my view was and is that the additions merely clarified and emphasized ideas and a direction present from the earliest version. Later, in a lively article, called "The Pseudo-Problem of *Comus,*" Mr. Maxwell took us both to task: Mr. Tillyard and I had, it seemed, invented the problem and then racked our brains for a solution. That he appeared somewhat to prefer mine did not alter the fact that it was all shadow boxing! So easy and agreeable does Mr. Maxwell make everything seem, that one almost wishes he were right. Meanwhile Professor Haller, pursuing his invaluable studies in the Puritan art of love, deplored the too curious questionings of Professors Saurat and Hanford and myself, without at all differentiating between us, and committed himself to two propositions which, if true, would strongly support Mr. Maxwell: that Milton "wrote *Comus* simply to oblige his friend Henry Lawes" (which is surely to confuse the content of the poem with its occasion) and that he "could hardly . . ., in the circumstances, have ventured to bring in the theme of marriage" (which, of course, is exactly what, in the Epilogue, he does). Now Professor Allen, accepting the general soundness of my analysis, has reasserted what I had not indeed denied (though I thought it had been, like the news of Mark Twain's death, a good deal exaggerated), that *Comus* was an artistic failure; and Mr. Macklem has carried my thesis farther—and indeed a good deal farther than the evidence warrants—in an effort to show that Milton's position on love and marriage, as formulated in *Paradise Lost,* was already reached in *Comus.* Finally, Mr. Clarke pointed out that my article (and also Mr. Tillyard's) ignored the intervention of Sabrina, and that no interpretation which did so could be regarded as complete. In this he was perfectly correct, but in the interpretation which he proceeded to offer of the incident he was, I think, completely wrong.

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[1] *University of Toronto Quarterly,* XI, 1941, 46-71.

[2] E. M. W. Tillyard, "The Action of *Comus*" (*Essays and Studies of the English Association,* XXVIII, 1942, 22-37); William Haller, "Hail Wedded Love" (*English Literary History,* XIII, 1946, 87-90); J. C. Maxwell, "The Pseudo-Problem of *Comus*" (*Cambridge Journal,* I, 1948, 376-80); D. C. Allen, "Milton's *Comus* as a Failure in Artistic Compromise" (*ELH,* XVI, 1949, 104-19); C. Clarke, "A Neglected Episode in *Comus*" (*The Wind and the Rain,* VI, 1949, 103-7); M. K. Macklem, "Love, Nature and Grace in Milton" (*Queen's Quarterly,* LVI, 1949-50, 534-47). The earlier work of D. Saurat, referred to, is his *Milton, Man and Thinker* (New York, 1925), with no change in the second edition of 1944; that of J. H. Hanford, his "Youth of Milton," included in *Studies in Shakespeare, Milton and Donne,* University of Michigan Publications, Language and Literature, I (1925), with no substantial change in his *John Milton, Englishman* (New York, 1949).

Let me ingenuously confess that I omitted to comment on the intervention of Sabrina because I did not then understand it, as I have long since come to do, and let me devote the limited space at my disposal to explaining the episode and placing it in its context.

As we look at *Comus,* in the light of the frame of reference and the movement of ascent, explained in my earlier article, it seems evident that the action of the piece constitutes a sort of pilgrimage, and that each of its three settings has a clear symbolic value. The Wild Wood through which the journey lies represents this world, the order of nature, where good and evil grow up together and must be discriminated by reason, and where the good, when recognized, must be adhered to by the will; for though nature itself is good, its dictates may be misconceived and its benefits perverted to evil ends, as they are by Comus, and the world thus becomes a place of danger and of "hard assays." The Palace of Comus, situated in the wood, and "set forth with all manner of deliciousness," represents one of those crystallizations of evil, those crises of temptation, which abound in the world, good though it be, and into which through ignorance even the good may enter. Ludlow Town and the Castle, situated without the wood, and at the end of the journey, represent what another poet has called "the kindred points of heaven and home," the goal of the pilgrimage and the reward of virtue; for Ludlow, if it is the parents' dwelling, is also a symbol of the Heavenly City.

In the first setting (the wild wood), the Attendant Spirit appears, fresh from the ideal world that is his dwelling, the world where all "natures" exist in their pure and uncorrupted state; and the Spirit is the agent and symbol, not of grace in its full extent, but of divine protection and a measure of guidance. But in this setting also appear Comus and his rout, symbols of the perversion of natural goods to evil ends. There the Lady is separated from the Brothers, and, deceived by Comus, follows him, while the Brothers stay to discourse of natural virtue, of its self-protective power, of the protection which Providence affords to it (whose recognition is reinforced by the entrance of the Attendant Spirit), and of the ascent of natural virtue to the very verge of heaven. Thus the disquisition of the Brothers and the Spirit lays the necessary foundations in doctrine for the Lady's encounter with Comus and the subsequent action.

In the second setting (the palace of Comus) the Lady defends herself, and the virtues of temperance and continence, by the use of that reason of which the enchanter's "False words prankt in Reason's garb" are a mockery, and by an appeal to that nature whose dictates he wilfully misconceives. For the higher doctrine of chastity, as the Elder Brother has already expounded it, how profitless (she reflects) to utter it to Comus, who has ears but hears not! It is enough to afford to the reader a hint that will recall to him the earlier exposition. And for the highest reaches of the argument, where chastity is gathered up into the order of grace, and finds itself symbolized, but not exhausted, by

> the sage
> And serious doctrine of Virginity:

while the Lady refers to it, one may doubt whether it has yet entered fully into her experience. Else why should she be immobilized by Comus and require (as we shall see she does) a new infusion of grace to effect her release?

It is clear that in *Comus* Milton, unlike Spenser in the third book of the *Faerie Queene*, seeks the dynamic that is to transform chastity into a positive virtue, a principle of action, not in nature, but in grace. It is symbolized, almost indeed stated, in the episode of Sabrina (ll. 814-958). In the preceding lines (659-813) the Lady has successfully resisted the attack of Comus: she has met his argument on the natural level; she has in effect invoked the Elder Brother's account of chastity, but her rescuers find her "In stony fetters fixed and motionless," bound by a spell which she is powerless to break for herself, however firmly principled in virtue, and which requires to be reversed before she can be freed. There is, however, another way, as the Attendant Spirit (who is himself unable to break the spell) knows. It is possible to summon the aid of Sabrina. She comes, performs her task, and explains her role (908-19):

> Shepherd, 'tis my office best
> To help ensnared chastity.
> Brightest Lady, look on me:
> Thus I sprinkle on thy breast
> Drops that from my fountain pure
> I have kept of precious cure:
> Thrice upon thy finger's tip,
> Thrice upon thy rubied lip:
> Next this marble venomed seat,
> Smeared with gums of glutinous heat,
> I touch with chaste palms moist and cold.
> Now the charm hath lost his hold. . . .

The symbolism is unmistakable. When during the fight with the Dragon (*Faerie Queene,* I, XI, xxix-xxx) Spenser has the Redcross Knight stagger back into a stream of living water and come forth restored, the informed reader immediately recognizes, not a reference to baptism (as critics have too bluntly supposed and said), but the symbol for a renewed infusion of divine grace, whose imagery belongs to the same category of Christian symbolism as finds its most familiar example in the sacrament of baptism. So with the episode of Sabrina: the sprinkling of pure water, those drops of "precious cure," symbolizes an infusion of divine grace, and what is implied is the secure raising of the problem to the religious level where alone it is soluble and where alone the dynamic of true virtue must be sought.

Through the words of the Attendant Spirit, Milton introduces the legend of Sabrina by an allusion to Spenser:

> now I bethink me,
> Some other means I have which may be used,
> Which once of Meliboeus old I learnt,
> The soothest shepherd that e'er piped on plains.

The lines have been taken to acknowledge Milton's source for the story of Sabrina, in the *Faerie Queene* (II, x, xvii-xix);[3] and this perhaps is their surface meaning. But of the use to which Milton puts the legend, of the symbolic value which he gives to his elaboration of it, there is no hint in Spenser's story of Sabrina. For that Milton could only turn to the book of the poem which moves throughout on the level of grace, and to such an episode as we have cited above.

Nor, perhaps, does the debt to Spenser stop here. The power of grace to destroy evil is part of its function in freeing the good. In the slaying of Maleger (II, XI, xlv-xlvi)[4] by casting him into the standing lake, Prince Arthur invokes the power of grace, symbolized by water, to destroy evil, just as Sabrina sprinkles the precious drops, not only upon the Lady, freeing her by an infusion of grace, but upon Comus's throne, destroying its evil effect. That the Attendant Spirit, the agent of Providence, should have been unable immediately to effect the Lady's release is also significant: his mission is to protect innocence and virtue in the natural order (like Arthur in the *Faerie Queene,* II, VIII), and to afford a measure of guidance (like Una in Book I); but the operation of grace must be differentiated from protection and even guidance, as it consistently is by Spenser, and must be given its own clearly marked symbols. In this likewise Milton follows his master.

The episode of Sabrina should bring home to us the nature and extent of Spenser's influence on *Comus,* and the fact that, whatever else the poem may be, it is in the fullest sense Spenserian allegory, with different levels of meaning. No doubt it was the local association of the Sabrina legend that prompted its introduction, and set Milton upon his essay in Spenserian myth-making in order to adapt it first to the action, then to the deeper meaning of the poem. And lest we should fail to realize the significance of Sabrina's intervention, and the limitation of his own role, the Attendant Spirit is made to exclaim (938-47):

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[3] See, for example, Merritt Hughes's note on 1. 822 of *Comus,* in *Paradise Regained, the Minor Poems, and Samson Agonistes* (New York, 1937), 260.

[4] For the interpretation of this incident see my "Nature and Grace in the *Faerie Queene*" (*ELH,* XVI, 1949, 221-2).

> Come, Lady, while Heaven lends us grace,
> Let us fly this cursed place . . .
> Not a waste or needless sound
> Till we come to holier ground.
> I shall be your faithful guide
> Through this gloomy covert wide;
> And not many furlongs thence
> Is your Father's residence. . . .

The spell is broken. Mobility is restored. The Lady is freed, by the operation of grace, to resume her journey and to make her way through the wild wood, which is the world, to the "holier ground," the Heavenly City, whose earthly image is Ludlow.

Like Spenser, Milton does not leave us without clues to his deeper meaning if we will read him with sufficient care. The episode of Sabrina, properly understood, is not only consonant with my interpretation of *Comus;* it is essential to that interpretation. For the episode signalizes the secure achievement of the level of grace, and it is from the vantage point of grace that the Epilogue takes its retrospective view, and every good falls into its appointed place in a pattern, a vision of existence, which only the Christian can fully apprehend.

ANABASE: THE ENDLESS FILM

HAROLD H. WATTS

IN a letter to Archibald MacLeish, St. John Perse—Alexis Léger—writes: "Of all the museums of Europe through which out of courtesy I have passed . . . I have retained a very few impressions. . . ." To round out the word "impressions," Perse mentions objects that range from a crystal skull to ornamental linings of cigar boxes. This vignette that Perse provides—the poet preserving his courteous attention as he wanders among the glass cases that hold up the remnants of a confused past to our view—some readers of *Anabase* may judge is a further indication that the poet is arbitrary and capricious. Is it not possible to suppose that the author of *Anabase*—like his other self who, one supposes, strolls through a hall, pauses attentive before a set of armour for an Infante, and then moves on—is guided by what, in more rationalistic ages, would have been called blind whim?

Judgment impatient and hasty, judgment that is eager to terminate the problem set for it by *Anabase,* may be quite willing to make this use of the clue Perse provides. It is a quick end to one's labours to suppose that *Anabase* is the capricious, unorganized record of a cultivated stroll through another greater museum than Perse has ever visited in Europe, a museum not housed in a public building where the exhibits are ticketed to show era and provenience but an open-air museum wild and confused, a museum carelessly accumulated from the detritus of the past and offered us by a poet whose only guide is his own arbitrary, unsystematic will. Such judgment might run that in *Anabase* he invites the public to stroll past his exhibits: horse-sacrifice, the trades followed in an ancient city, and the linen of ancient queen and princess laid out on the ground to dry, and brown at the armholes from perspiration.

When a friend returns from a long journey—and *Anabase* represents a very long journey—we listen to his impressions, and we have little inclination to blame him for not noticing other things. We note that he has made a collection of facts, interesting or beautiful in their own right (as are many of the "facts," the images and views, offered by *Anabase*). We do not berate our friend for failing to systematize his facts, to draw from his travels a generalization singular and yet moving that shall suddenly illuminate all human experience. It is not, we grant, the task of the traveller in space to discover the meaning of his travels. (And Perse is a traveller in time as well as space.) It is enough that a man has travelled with responsiveness. It is enough that *Anabase* is a *mélange* of aptly recorded impressions the poet has had concerning ancient migrations. It would be wrong to inquire why the poem does not contain *other* impressions, and why it does not at once drive toward an "overwhelming question." Perse's poem—such an estimate might conclude—has for its analogue the poet's own private recollection of museum exhibits; he remembers this, and he does not remember that. At this point, speculation about the poem does well to halt.

So might run a judgment of the poem, though one might add the tolerable qualification that the poet's memories or impressions are organized by a simple plan suggested by the alternate repose and movement of ancient peoples. *Anabase,* so viewed, is a rarefied, unsensual *bon voyage* basket, packed with delicacies that one samples at random. More soberly, *Anabase* is a poem that may be regarded as a source of aesthetic pleasure, intense and pure but also disparate and devoid of real organization and significance. The framework of alternate city-building and migration is a convenience, no more. The framework is like the base metal that is fashioned to form a reliquary; it exists to be encrusted with the pure gems which Perse takes up from the chests of treasure that he has come upon.

II

All this is very convenient to the reader. He takes the cash (the aesthetic delight) and presumes there is no credit (no rationale and no emergent meaning in the poem). But, by the mid-point of the twentieth century, to rest in aesthetic delight ministered to by a poem like *Anabase* should be seen as a clear evasion of duty. *Anabase,* the English as well as the French reader should know, is not unique. It is a member of a genus that accumulates species as the decades of the century pass by. Joyce's *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake,* Eliot's *The Waste Land,* Pound's *Cantos,* and Perse's *Anabase:* these are works which constitute recognizable examples. These members of a literary kind, a kind peculiar to our era, have striking markings. To the conventional judgment, they are formless; that is, they do not offer the reader the convenience of either a narrative or a logically disposed argument. To the conventional judgment, these works offer, to a greater or less degree, the confusing riches of sharply presented images chosen according to a principle of selection not immediately obvious, and arranged (if arranged at all) according to a scheme that does without the "artful aids" of logical categories and clear transitions. It is a kind that, for readers who find their initial reaction one of pleasure rather than irritation, encourages intense and unanalytical participation. One's first duty would seem to be that of being adequate to the recorded emotion and sensibility of the writer.

But past criticism of other members of this kind should suggest that delight is but a stage, a halting-place, in one's reading of Perse's poem. For example, it has been made clear that absence of flat statement as to intent and meaning does not justify the judgment that the mixtures of cultural memories in *Finnegans Wake* and Pound's *Cantos* permit one to say that the two works are cultural rubbish-heaps. Absence of conventional form does not mean absence of organizing and directing form in *The Waste Land* and *Ulysses*. Nor does, in Pound's poem, the mixture of most of the levels of English and American usage with foreign tags and snatches, or the merging in *Finnegans Wake* of many languages justify the obvious judgment upon these works: that here are erudition and ingenuity gone mad, that here is a "decadence" that Max Nordau, in his turn-of-the-century simplicity, scarcely dreamed of. In fact, criticism of all these works has suggested observations that are highly useful when one tries to think intelligently of Perse's poem. Criticism, naturally, has reached no final agreement, but it has set up the following as strong possibilities: (1) Lack of some kind of traditional form does not automatically mean the absence of any kind of form or method of organizing sensibility. (2) The emphasis on directly rendered sensibility is the result of a suspicion of the older rational or logical ways of handling what is given by the senses. (3) The range of materials —usually bewildering to the conventional reader—represents an effort to make available to modern cultures sections of past human experience that have been overlooked. (4) Absence of explicit statement does not mean absence of specific meaning or point. In these works, however, this point is not provided by the author but is the end-product of a successful relation between the poem and the reader.

These are observations that have risen from careful reading of poems or works other than *Anabase*. It can be suggested that they cast a good deal of light on *Anabase*. Perse, like the other writers mentioned, wanders through the vast rubbish-heap piled up for us by the past. He picks and chooses, and his poem is an effort to assimilate what he has taken up, without committing the offence of poets of the past, that of distorting it beyond recognition.

III

Older acts of picking and choosing are (such a work as *Anabase* suggests) no longer valid; they are not likely to produce, for our culture, anything but boredom or entertainment, according to the reader. The approach of Victor Hugo to past history, Goethe's effort to appropriate the fruits of Greek culture, Keats's naïve patronage of the Middle Ages: all these were frontal attacks on the secrets of human experience supposedly locked up in past societies. There are grounds for arguing that this is an attack that does not work. The Elgin marbles are carried off to the British Museum, and the head of Nefertete is set up in Berlin; but the Parthenon is not captured for our profit, and the temple-tombs stand undisturbed at the edge of the Nile valley. The heart of the ancient culture does not beat for us; the vital force that created the cultural objects in our museums is untapped. The explorations of past ages with the intent of capturing insights that shall be sovereign for present ills, all these (within the limits of conventional literary forms, drama, narrative, or "philosophical poem") produce the pastiche and justify the depressing observation that all writing of history produces no more than a history of the present. If he is content to work within conventional limits, the poet produces works that mirror his own age accurately and leave (to quote from Perse's letter to MacLeish again) no more than a "romantic after-taste." If one is to taste, really and not delusively, the fruits of another culture, those fruits must be gathered in other ways. They must be, if the term is allowable, surprised.

Anabase abounds in these techniques of surprise. What narrative there is, in the poem, is a typical rather than a specific narrative. What one can perceive is the pains of city-founding, the growth of settled life, and then the rebirth of the restlessness that sends a whole civilization forth on further "folk-wanderings." But these are not seen very well. The central "truth" of a certain section of Perse's poem—a "truth" which a nineteenth-century poet would somewhere present as a clear abstraction—exists only in the mind of the poet and in the mind of the successful reader. What one can *see* in the poem is a succession of minutiae that (shall we say?) will coerce the emergence, in the mind of the reader, of the abstraction which guides the poet as he selects from the rubbish-heap of the past the specific objects to be rendered in his verse. The nineteenth-century poet delighted in telling one what a past culture *was*—"the grandeur that was Greece, the glory that was Rome." In contrast, Perse throughout his poem provides us with *materials* on which to base generalizations; but the details included are not all on one level of explicitness and significance. It is as if the total truth about any past stage in human struggle is composed of diversified and even inharmonious materials: the traders in the market-places of the poem, the wind from the west, the unaccompanied songs of girls.

Perhaps, the accent of the poem suggests, any section of time, if properly reconstructed, should offer to the reader an intense present rather than the reconstructed past. The fault of the conventional "rescue" of the past is that everything dredged up is at once ticketed as Greek or Roman or medieval. What was once various and inconsequent and vital is regularized; a past age becomes typical and loses touch with its springs of vitality. Perse's presentation has the effect of preserving the intense present; the throng of images is to be apprehended rather than understood. If understanding is to come at all (and I believe it does in this poem), it must come only after the reader has suffered the buffets and wrestled with the *non-sequiturs* of the intense present. The serious reader is not to be allowed easy access to such statements as: "Greece was . . ." or "the Middle Ages were. . . ." What he arrives at, pressing his way forward through the medium Perse contrives, may well be as simple as the judgment that begins, "Greece was. . . ." But it will be a judgment that the reader has earned, and it will continue to have around it an aura of uncertainty, the very aura (we recognize) that surrounds any laboured generalization that we finally utter about the society in which we live, our own particular "intense present." In short, *Anabase* has a form, and it is one that provides a series of impacts. It provides them, one might note, without logical link or author's explanation. The result, often, is initial confusion; it is also the initial sharpness that belongs to the intense present rather than the understood past. The past, once understood, is dead and inoperative for a later age; its glory has departed. The present—if we can resuscitate it rather than its ghost—may trail little glory, but it is infused with vitality.

There is, this poem testifies, another cause which leads men of our century to prefer the direct instant rather than the remembered one decently dressed and laid out in its funeral weeds. This cause goes deeper than the rejections of the conventional and rational handling of historical material just described. It leads to a flat rejection of the reason and its supposed powers, not just a criticism of those powers as they are exercised in historical reconstruction but as they are exercised in any connection. A poet like Perse does not go so far as to say, by his preoccupation with the movements of sensibility, that man "thinks" with his epiglottis (a behaviourist tenet); but the effect of his poem is to assert the tenet in softened, more acceptable form. The only "real" is the moment of sensing, seeing, or smelling. Poetry is concerned with reality when it reconstructs, so far as words can reconstruct, what is valid only when given by the five senses. Poetry departs from reality whenever it spends its time retracing the processes of the mind, processes that express themselves in inference, argument, and the comparison and valuation of immediate experience. This is the more deep-lying consideration that enforces Perse's abstention from evaluative statement. Such statement will not only weaken the presentation of the "intense present"; it will involve the poet in a kind of activity (reasoning) which has never done much to guide and enlighten men, which is, as our word "rationalizing" suggests, at best "busy work" after the fact. It is perhaps a counsel of perfection to suggest that one may live by the facts and that one may brush away from them the cobweb-connections that reason has provided; but it is a counsel that in *Anabase* is followed. The artifices of reason, though doubtless they would facilitate understanding, are avoided. Perse's reproduction of the present moments is abundant and generous; abstract statement, upon its infrequent appearance, is compressed and grudging, as in the last lines of the poem:

> Mais de mon frère le poète on a eu des nouvelles. Il a ècrit encore une chose très douce. Et quelques-uns en eurent connaissance...

Abstract statement is kept in leash, and one may suspect irony in what Perse says of the stage in human history when reason is used:

> Non que l'étape fut stérile: au pas des bêtes sans alliances (nos chevaux purs aux yeux d'aînés), beaucoup de choses entreprises sur les ténèbres de l'esprit—beaucoup de choses à loisir sur les frontières de l'esprit—grandes histoires séleucides au sifflement des frondes et la terre livrée aux explications... (VIII)

It is perhaps inevitable that at times the earth should be given over to explanations, but Perse has seen to it that his poem is not.

If Perse's poem has a devotion to the immediately perceived (or what the poet judges would, in another age, be immediately perceived), a devotion that is expressed by both Joyce and Pound in other ways, and if the poem is in effect a disavowal of much that has gone to furnish older poems, Platonic or Christian, it also resembles much in the present world of letters at another point. At least, the English-writing authors we use for reference are, each in his own way, very knowing men; and if the learning that Pound displays in his serial poem and that Joyce pours out in the pages of *Finnegans Wake* is adjudged eccentric, it is a deviation from what the conventionally well-educated man knows that is more than caprice; nor (a usual charge) is it snobbism pure and simple.

The classical education which provided many generations of poets with materials available for use was really highly selective, partly because of the accidental obscuration for millenia of Egyptian and Mesopotamian culture, partly because the continuous story of Greek and Latin culture could be made (if looked at in retrospect) to sanction reason on his throne and the abstractions that were his ministers. Since the modern writers in question have their motives for wanting to tumble reason from the throne he does not deserve and since these writers wish to put sensation, accurate and intense, in reason's place, it is not strange that these writers all find other sections of human experience more usable. The pre-eminence of the Fisher King in *The Waste Land,* a personage whose origin antedates Greek culture; the linguistic play of Joyce's work that puts a great many cultures and eras on one plane; the dependence of Pound on Chinese culture, a culture that few Western poets have mastered: this is all part of a search for materials that have not been worked as exhaustively as have the Greek and Roman materials. This is not to say that the Greek and Roman materials could not be worked to yield their own "intense present"; but they have been made, for so many centuries, the basis of abstracting, generalizing treatment of the past that it is safer to turn to what is unsullied and fresh.

What Perse turns to is the monotonous, repetitive panorama which is offered by the civilization of many centuries along the Fertile Crescent in Mesopotamia and in lands to the north and east. It is difficult to be precise as to what people and era are intended. The Sabeans (V) were a Semitic people who lived along the Red Sea during the first millenium before Christ. The Seleucids (VIII) were the rulers who took over the central portion of Alexander's empire. Further, the geographical regions cannot be precisely identified. The first city (I-IV) is laid out, we are told repeatedly, on a slope and so is not to be readily identified with mankind's earliest cities like Sumer, Akkad, and Erech. The Kassites and the Elamites, however, moved from higher lands north-east, into the Fertile Crescent; and to these two nations might be added a long catalogue of other peoples who have also moved westward across the region: Turks, Mongols, and Tartars. As for the sea which, at the end of the poem, stirs the folk to new movement, there is no reason to say that it must be *one* of the following: the Caspian, the Black Sea, or the Mediterranean, although the mention of the Seleucids and the Sabeans gives the Mediterranean the edge. One cannot be precise about the folk; one must be similarly uncertain about the sort of person the Stranger is who is involved in setting up the first city and in making the tribe a nation. Is this Stranger a conqueror after the style of Darius the Persian whose power was used beneficently? Or is he a simple vessel of wrath like the later Tamerlane? Do his functions hark back to very ancient ones, when every king was a priest-king so that his health was the health of his people? The reference to the Stranger's failing health—"il n'y a plus en lui substance d'homme" (V)—coincides with the growth of the desire of the people to move on. Nor do the references to ancient code and religion allow one to say: Not this people but that. The power of the sun is acknowledged (I); the colt that is born in the introductory song is sacrificed later on (X). But Perse will not be committed, for the horse-sacrifice is but one of many sacrifices: "beaucoup de choses sur la terre à entendre et à voir, choses vivantes parmi nous!" It is as if the very multiplicity of rite and custom is introduced to keep us from deciding what movement of peoples is in question. Some details assert that the city being founded was one of the first cities: "Ainsi la ville fut fondée et placée au matin sous les labiales d'un nom pur" (IV). At least, it has been many centuries since all cities bore the name of a god. Yet other details make the founded city practically contemporaneous with us:

> les élections de magistrats du port, les vocalises aux banlieues et, sous les tièdes couvaisons d'orage,
> la ville jaune, casquée d'ombre, avec ses caleçons de filles aux fenêtres. (IV)

Because of this uncertainty—an uncertainty that the poet could resolve but that the poem does not—*Anabase* places before us a special problem, one that is hardly comparable with the uses of the past made in poems that otherwise have much in common with Perse's work. The questions take this shape: Why does Perse, once he has found his usable past, refuse to commit himself to specific parts of it? Why, though the successive moments of the revived culture are presented as portions of an "intense present," are we left groping as to when that culture existed? Answers to these questions do a good deal to clarify Perse's attitude and the total effect of his poem. Here too, though on its own terms, *Anabase* resembles other modern works of which it has been suggested that "absence of explicit statement does not mean absence of specific meaning or point."

One may begin by suggesting that the uncertainties noted exist as a means of directing the reader toward the proper assimilation of the materials the poem places at his disposal. Culture-historians point out that the early history of the Fertile Crescent and adjacent regions runs a course different from that of Egypt and that of Greece.

The history of Egypt was played out in comparative isolation, at least during its formative, creative years; and circumstances favoured, for Egypt, a prolongation of life that few other cultures have enjoyed. The history of Greece offers us another spectacle of the development and adjustment to each other of certain given cultural factors. The isolation was not so complete as Egypt's, and certainly the speed of the drama was swift: the drama was over and done with in what is, historically speaking, a short time. The history of the Mesopotamian region offers us a different picture; it is in this difference that may lie both the attraction of this material for Perse and the reason for his failure to be precise and identify the folk of his poem as a particular folk.

Mesopotamian origins go back as far as Egyptian, and yet the process that we now discuss continues more than a millenium into our era. It is a curiously inconclusive section of human history; whereas the stories of Egypt and Greece are, each in its way, conclusive. An inspection of the first three thousand years (to 1000 B.C.) offers us, in the land along the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, a great many stories; Lagash, Kish, Sumer, and a great many other cities are founded, often under the supervision of a remarkable man whom historians call a "culture-hero" and whom Perse calls the Stranger. The city is named for a god; and around the holy places cluster the houses of workmen whose many trades Perse catalogues in X. The history of this region tells us repeatedly how cities are imperilled by neighbouring cities, how leagues are formed and disintegrate, and how one priest-king gains hegemony over several other cities. Yet all this fades before an onslaught from without or because (some guess) of an interior "failure of nerve." Onslaughts are invited by the very geographical situation of these regions; there are no barriers of sea or mountain to turn aside envious or greedy tribes from without, and the spectacle of the settled city with its green fields stirs the cupidity of desert-dweller to the south and mountain herdsman to the north and east. This, or something like, is what the history of this great stretch of land has to offer an imagination that is seeking a usable past.

The history of Egypt and even more the linked histories of Greece and Rome constitute dramas. The Egyptian one tells of decay that is arrested. The Greek and Roman stories present more exciting material: decay that spreads through the body politic once and for all. In Mesopotamia, though cities rise and fall, though at later periods Arabs and Turks and Mongols sweep across the defenceless plains, there is nothing conclusive about the spectacle. Rather there is a resemblance to the endless films to be seen in a peep-show gallery; one puts in his dime, the dancer enters, performs, and retires—and if one puts in another dime, the dancer will return with identical mien and gesture.

That the successive civilizations and wanderings and invasions offer an analogous spectacle may explain several curious features of *Anabase* already noted. It explains why there is no effort to suggest to the reader that the people involved is a particular people. What definite references the poem does contain suggest instead that these are all the wanderings and city-foundings that this region has known, and that Perse may wish to make vivid the "intense present" of *all* the film-like repetitions that constitute history in this area. By restricting the poem to the laws and customs of one people (say, the Assyrians), Perse might reduce the suggestiveness of his poem. (A parallel to his choice is Eliot's merging, in *The Waste Land,* of a great many religions and their formulae and symbols.)

Finally, it can be suggested that Perse, in *Anabase,* is committed as thoroughly as was an older poet when he provided his poem with an explicit motto and a moral. Perse the poet is not arbitrary in the sense suggested by Léger's recollections of European museums. One may only speculate why Alexis Léger recalls the suit of armour he saw in Madrid, but one may be rather sure why the poet chooses to recall the whole confusing, repetitious drama of history in Mesopotamia and nearby regions. More so than in other works of its kind, there is in *Anabase* a narrowing of scope, an arrangement of precise sensory figures that is as full of "insidious intent" as an essay of flat exposition.

What is this "insidious intent," an intent never stated but firmly guiding the poet as he picks out the details that compose his intense and persuasive present? The specific meaning or point of the poem, a meaning that does not force the poet to wade in the muddy waters of abstraction since it leaves that labour to each reader, takes this shape: history offers us this interesting lesson (or at least that section of history which Perse has rendered in the poem)—the essence of human history is its cyclic quality, a quality that the Greeks, with less reason than had the people in *Anabase,* perceived. Within these cycles there may be variations. The character of the wandering people may change, and the new city may not be an exact copy of the old one. But these variations are without meaning, the basic steps of the dance are always retraced.

Why should Perse think it necessary to fashion a technically unorthodox poem that has, after all, a platitude for its point? One may guess. That history repeats itself is a platitude that we utter cheerfully, but it is one that we, as Western men, do not really believe. Western men have not believed it since the Renaissance and have given the bulk of their credence to the occult powers of progress that somehow will set each new generation apart from previous ones—progress which will create for Western man a unique destiny which is the product of technological ingenuity and social tinkering. Perhaps the statement that history repeats itself has been rejected even longer by our culture; predominantly Christian centuries certainly would not subscribe to it since they naturally believed that the incarnation of Christ made the centuries that followed the event utterly different from those that preceded. Thus, though men may give lip-service to the proposition that history is one film that is shown over and over again, they really do not believe it. In their hearts there is a deep-seated conviction that they struggle forward through the morass of war and poverty toward a Last Judgment or a utopia that shall make all the difference.

Anabase, one may suppose, exists to make an attack on bland, fantastic assumptions that in no way have the warrant of fact, assumptions that make man's plight worse because they counsel him that it can be better. Further, it is a flank attack. That is, it employs the techniques that allow the poet to approach his point without announcing it; the frontal attack, the confrontation of one abstraction with another, would not work. *Ideas* about history and *ideas* about progress are the intellectual small coin of our culture which, at our play, we pyramid and lose without much sense of real gain or loss. If we are to be torn from our folly, from our worship of progress or concern with salvation, it is our *feelings* that must be changed, not our ideas. We must be made to feel, rather than to know, that human existence is set about with the barriers that history (or the section that Perse presents) so richly testifies to. Poems written in other centuries have sought to alter man by pressing upon him ideas and illustrations of ideas, and they have altered very little the courses that man has followed. *Anabase* is an attack on the emotions of man, of which ideas (one judges) are but a faint exhalation. That such attacks are being made by a good many writers, and made independently of each other, must be recognized by persons who try to chart the drift or (if the expression is preferable) measure the drive of modern literature.

HYDRIOTAPHIA AND *THE GARDEN OF CYRUS:* A PARADOX AND A COSMIC VISION

MARGARET ASH HEIDEMAN

IN 1658 Sir Thomas Browne published together *Hydriotaphia, Urn Burial; or, a Discourse of the Sepulchral Urns Lately Found in Norfolk,* and *The Garden of Cyrus; or, The Quincuncial Lozenge, or Net-Work Plantations of the Ancients, Artificially, Naturally, Mystically Considered.* Despite the seeming disparity of their titles, the relationship of these two compositions is more one of blood than of water. Basically the subjects have a certain identity, and their expression represents the highest point of artistic perfection reached by a dweller in many worlds: a lover of ancient lore who was a good scientist, a sceptic who was a man of faith, a constant dissector of the microcosm who was also a mental traveller of the macrocosm.

Hydriotaphia has been the subject of diverse critical speculations. Sir Edmund Gosse and Lytton Strachey felt that there was some symbolic unity to the composition. Gosse found symbolic significance in the burnt opal which still retained some lustre.[1] Strachey pointed out that the recurrent figure of Methuselah had a unifying effect.[2] In recent years Mr. J. M. Cline has attributed the unity of the piece to its form which, he believes, is based on the literary form of the paradox, and from mortality proves immortality in the wittiest seventeenth-century manner.[3] The two older critics, distracted by the many degrees of Browne's oscillations between plain fact and pure poetry and by the exaltation of the last section, did not view *Hydriotaphia* as a whole. Mr. Cline approaches from another direction. His argument is rewarding, but his main thesis is denied by the fact that here, as elsewhere, whatever unity is found in Browne's compositions is organic and not artificial. It is the product of imagination rather than of wit.

Hydriotaphia readily yields the secret of its unity to a complete imaginative apprehension, for its subject is integral to Browne's most characteristic way of thinking and writing. It is another variation on the constant theme of life and death, the paradox which resulted not from the studied use of a literary form but from the imaginative coupling of two figures which Browne knew scientifically. The dominant and unifying symbol of *Hydriotaphia* is neither the opal nor

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[1] Sir E. Gosse, *Sir Thomas Browne* (London, 1905), 110.

[2] L. Strachey, *Books and Characters* (Toronto, 1922), 46.

[3] J. M. Cline, *"Hydriotaphia"* (*University of California Publications in English,* VIII, 1940, 73-100).

Methuselah. It is that "mystery of similitude" which Browne finds in the burial urn and the human womb. "But the common form with necks was a proper figure, making our last bed like our first; nor much unlike the Urnes of our Nativity, while we lay in the nether part of the Earth, and inward vault of our Microcosme."[4]

Hydriotaphia has been generally described as the most poetical and highly figurative of all Browne's work, but an analysis reveals that, if Browne does here reach the height of his capabilities as a literary artist, this is not owing to the mere amount of imagery which he employs. His high level of artistic effect is achieved by the contraction and expansion of an ironic thought accompanied by a rare quality of symbolic imagery which unifies all. Certain predominating symbols recur with increasing frequency in his detailed discussion of the rites of death throughout man's history until a climax is reached in a great crescendo. From the beginning, the reader feels that Browne's subject-title symbolizes a more profound meaning, that his real topic will open out into life and death in time and eternity, as Browne hints in his dedication to Thomas LeGros: "But these are sad and sepulchral Pitchers, which have no joyful voices; silently expressing old mortality, the ruines of forgotten times, and can only speak with life, how long in this corruptible frame, some parts may be uncorrupted; yet able to outlast bones long unborn, and noblest pyle among us."

Browne describes first the ancient burial customs of many nations. In chapter II, the urns of Walsingham lead to the discussion of burial customs in Britain during the Roman occupation and among races allied to the ancient Britons. The central third chapter opens in the heart of the professed subject, with a particular description of the "present Urnes," which turns into a statement of symbolical significance. From this point on there is a gradual imaginative expansion which gathers momentum to the end; Browne repeats or suggests the central urn-womb paradox four times in the following chapter and six times in the last.

In the course of his discussion Browne cites the ancient symbolic funeral rite which required that the mother wrap the bones of a dead child in linen and dry them "in her bosome, the first fostering part, and place of their nourishment. . . ." He also considers the posture of burial "contrary to the most naturall way of birth; Nor unlike our pendulous posture, in the doubtful state of the womb"; and finds "That they carried them out of the world with their feet forward, not inconsonant unto reason: As contrary unto the native posture of man, and his production first into it." A discussion of the uncertainties of man's knowledge of future life leads to the observation that "A Dialogue between two Infants in the womb concerning the state of this world, might handsomely illustrate our ignorance of the next, whereof methinks we yet discourse in *Platoes* denne, and are but *Embryon* Philosophers." The fourth chapter ends with an assertion of faith in immortality, based on the belief that man's restless aspirations and "superior ingredients" must lead to some goal.

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[4] Quotations from *Hydriotaphia* and *The Garden of Cyrus* are from *The Religio Medici & Other Writings of Sir Thomas Browne* (Everyman's Library, 1906); from *Pseudodoxia Epidemica*, from *Sir Thomas Browne's Works*, ed. by S. Wilkin (London, 1836).

The tremendous final chapter, so often quoted to the exclusion of the rest of the composition, progresses for only a few lines before the symbol central to the theme is again met: "If they fell by long and aged decay, yet wrapt up in the bundle of time, they fall into indistinction, and make but one blot with Infants. If we begin to die when we live, and long life be but a prolongation of death; our life is a sad composition; We live with death, and die not in a moment." This reflection brings to Browne's mind the names of some of his favourite giants of old: Methuselah, Archimedes, Moses, David, Solomon, and Job, "who cursed not the day of his life, but his Nativity: Content to have so farre been, as to have a Title to future being; Although he had lived here but in an hidden state of life, and as it were an abortion." Man attempts in vain to be remembered in name or monument when: "There is no antidote against the *Opium* of time, which temporally considereth all things; Our Fathers finde their graves in our short memories, and sadly tell us how we may be buried in our Survivors." This is an inversion of the prime symbol, a repetition of the paradoxical thought expanded in the second-last paragraph of *Religio Medici,* ending: "Thus I perceive a man may be buried alive, and behold his grave in his own issue."

This image continues in *Hydriotaphia* with the description of death as the *"Lucina* of life," and, shortly following, the climactic sentence that expresses the mystery of man in his relation to the life-cycle: "But man is a Noble Animal, splendid in ashes, and pompous in the grave, solemnizing Nativities and Deaths with equal lustre, nor omitting Ceremonies of bravery in the infamy of his nature." The last expression of this unifying symbol is in the very conclusion, the prelude to Browne's so often quoted description of Christian mysticism: "Pious spirits who passed their dayes in raptures of futurity, made little more of this world, then the world that was before it, while they lay obscure in the Chaos of pre-ordination, and night of their fore-beings." The significance of this variously repeated symbol, expanding with the climax of the theme, produces the catharsis of the most profound tragedy.

Metaphorical description of the birth-death paradox, is, of course, a more or less constant literary commonplace. Shakespeare used it:

> The earth that's nature's mother is her tomb:
> What is her burying grave that is her womb. . . .[5]

It was expressed in other terms by Sir Thomas Browne's friend, Bishop Hall: "Death borders upon our birth, and our cradle stands in the grave."[6] Again, Donne asks the question: "Doth not man die even in his birth? The breaking of prison is death, and what is our birth, but a breaking of prison?"[7]

Browne understood with Ecclesiastes and with his own age that, humanly speaking, there was no truly original subject. His problem was to give his particular expression to the birth-death theme, so congenial to his nature and to the mental climate of his time. There is evidence from his own statement and from the form of his finished compositions that the subject which would produce a sustained effort on his part must "allow Excursions, and venially admit of collateral Truths, though at some distance from their Principals."[8] *Hydriotaphia* was just such a subject. Though at first he was, perhaps, only "coldly drawn" to make more than such a set of scientific notes as he made later on the Brampton urns, the subject proved to be the "bye and barren" theme best suited to his invention.

In tracing his treatment of the deeper theme which emerged from his essay on the Walsingham urns, the use of the term symbol must be clarified, for Browne was not casting a veil of obscurity nor creating an atmosphere as his end in view, nor was the use of the symbol purely technical. He sometimes used the symbol in a single meaning, but in his larger and more especial uses of this figure his subtle insistence on its multiple visual and intellectual aspects must always be kept in mind. In *Hydriotaphia,* he begins with a symbol basically simple and representational. With the beginning of chapter III it becomes a double symbol, an ironic paradox, a complex image. His "mystery of similitude" returns in various forms in the latter part of his exposition on death and burial until near the end of chapter IV when he proceeds from the subject of death to that of immortality. The imaginative effect is now further heightened by a web of other images, some related to the central symbol, some not, but all adding to the cumulative effect as the composition opens out into variations on the theme of the antiphon in the "Order for the Burial of the Dead" in *The Book of Common Prayer,* "In the midst of life we are in death." The one is the hieroglyph of the other. It renders tenable the converse: In the midst of death we are in life.

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[5] *Romeo and Juliet,* II, iii, 9-10.

[6] J. Hall, *Epistles,* Dec. 3, Ep. 2; in *Works* (London, 1634), I, 289.

[7] J. Donne, *LXXX Sermons,* Sermon XV, Whitehall, March 8, 1621; excerpt in *Donne's Sermons,* ed. by L. Pearsall Smith (Oxford, 1920), 197.

[8] *The Garden of Cyrus,* Epistle Dedicatory.

The other images move with the tempo and rhythm of the theme and are most vivid when they restate it. An aphoristic type of image predominates. The human brain is the "*Metropolis* of humidity"; "old Families last not three Oaks"; and to "subsist in bones" is but to be "Pyramidally extant." Images which contribute obliquely to the theme are repeated, contrasted, combined: "There is no antidote against the *Opium* of time"; "But the iniquity of oblivion blindly scattereth her poppy. . . ." This symbol in its last form has the double connotation of "drowsiness" and of "infinite multitude," the latter meaning derived from the seed-pod of the poppy, an ancient symbol of fertility.[9] Snow images also appear and are contrasted with images of fire: "that duration, which maketh Pyramids pillars of snow, and all that's past a moment"; "miseries are slippery, or fall like snow upon us"; and "Life is a pure flame, and we live by an invisible Sun within us." Or these associations are incorporated into one: "Since our longest Sunne sets at right descensions, and makes but winter arches, and therefore it cannot be long before we lie down in darknesse, and have our light in ashes."

The subtle skill of Browne's use of proper names is everywhere evident in *Hydriotaphia.* Apart from their definite face-value, for few are used metaphorically, their function is constant in the rhythmic scheme. Used as illustration, they provide endless variety of rhythm and colour. By their means Browne moves the reader back and forth in space, time, and eternity, from Potosi to Walsingham, from Methuselah to Machiavel, from the Pharaohs to the Marquess of Dorset, from Dante's Inferno to Elizium. In his essay on *Hydriotaphia,* Mr. Cline asserts that here Browne has used the records of the antiquarian and the ideas of the philosopher as a poet might use the flowers of the field, by making images of them.[10] This is only partly true. Unjustifiably, Mr. Cline places facts cited for their informative value or for their literal pictorial effects on a level with those which Browne endows with an imaginative quality close to that of the symbol. All are subordinated to the antithetical pattern of the dominating symbol itself. It is the interplay of poetic fact and material symbol, of literal fact and poetic image, which sustains the wonderful mood of irony in *Hydriotaphia*.

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[9] *Pseudodoxia Epidemica,* Bk. VII, chap. VII.

[10] Cline, "*Hydriotaphia*" (*UCPE,* VIII, 81).

Contrary to the general impression, very few of Browne's images as a whole have their origin in his medical knowledge. Those few range from the almost banal "*Pia Mater*" to the more remarkable "*Pericardium*, but not the Heart of Truth." Browne, who was both attached physician and detached scientist, reveals most clearly in his factual considerations the intensity of his realization of man's life in relation to time and the universe which helped to crystallize the symbolic unity of *Hydriotaphia*. Reference may be made to his discussion of the growth and decline of the individual life as compared with the rise and declination of the sun in the zodiac or to his comment on the vulgar error concerning informous bear-cubs.[11] After refuting the latter by sense and by reason, he rejects it also as vilifying the works of God:

> imputing that unto the tongue of a beast, which is the strangest artifice in all the acts of nature; that is, the formation of the infant in the womb, not only in mankind, but all viviparous animals . . . who, entering the womb in bare and simple materials, return with distinction of parts, and the perfect breath of life. He that shall consider these alterations without, must needs conceive there have been strange operations within: which to behold, it were a spectacle almost worth one's being—a sight beyond all; except that man had been created first, and might have seen the show of five days after.

This poetic delight in the scientific fact is enriched in both compositions by echoes of the Psalmist's praise of God's artifice exemplified in the fabric of man:

> I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.
> My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.[12]

Hydriotaphia shows Browne at the height of his literary power making a constrained use of imagery to illustrate a theme of universal significance apprehended in the light of his multiple worlds. Elsewhere the balance was never quite so perfect, in the long range from bare scientific reports to the somewhat unrestrained and self-conscious ornamentation of *Christian Morals*.

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[11] *Pseudodoxia Epidemica*, Bk. VI, chap. IV; and Bk. III, chap. VI.
[12] Psalm 139: 14, 15.

II

Like its companion piece, *The Garden of Cyrus* has the aspects of a hieroglyph. A prime symbol is kept before the reader literally, representationally, and metaphorically throughout, either simultaneously or in parallel or single aspects. *The Garden of Cyrus* is as inspired with quiet joy as the *Hydriotaphia* with penetrating sadness. In contrast to the latter's glooms deepened by the glow of funeral fires, the former is bright with sunlight and starlight and the daytime colours of earth, its darkest shadows warmed by sun and stars. That the hint of irony was not at all unconscious, or even unintentional, is plain from the Epistle Dedicatory: "That we conjoin these Parts of different Subjects your Judgment will admit without impute of Incongruity; since the delightful World comes after Death, and Paradise succeeds the Grave. Since the verdant State of Things is the Symbol of the Resurrection, and to flourish in the State of Glory, we must first be sown in Corruption. Besides, the ancient Practice of Noble Persons, to conclude in Garden-Graves, and Urn themselves of old, to be wrapt up in Flowers and Garlands."

In the sub-title Browne tells us that the "Quincuncial Lozenge, or Net-Work Plantations of the Ancients," is to be "Artificially, Naturally, Mystically Considered," and his opening paragraph is a deliberate prelude to that delightful consideration. The image of the Roman Fire-God giving arrows to the God of the Sun and the Goddess of the Moon dissolves into the Genesis account of the creation of sun and moon while providing in the sequence another aspect of the theme, for Apollo and Diana are as well the Hermetic Androgyne. Sub-currents of this triple analogy parallel the discursive part of the work, emerging at times, as does the river Arethusa in Browne's borrowed image, in topic, allusion, example, or even sally of wit. Though the metaphorical images are fewer than the number of pages, an impression of highly imaginative expression quite out of proportion to the number of actual metaphors is conveyed to the reader. As in *Hydriotaphia,* this is partly due to the esoteric and exotic nature of some descriptions and allusions; it is also due in part to Browne's double-lensed view of external nature. Of greater importance still is the subtly insinuated presence of the planets and constellations of heaven, and of recurring images of lesser magnitude. This presiding influence unifies the composition within its multi-dimensional framework.

A sketch of Browne's plan of composition, as always, reveals a more definite scheme than is apparent on the surface—not the series of notes placed end to end described by M. Leroy.[13] Here, in the first chapter he writes of gardens in the order of their creation, and of the shape of the decussis (the "Quincuncial Lozenge," or five-pointed figure, consisting of the four corners of a rhombus and the point of intersection of diagonal lines), and of gardens which were made on this plan. There follows an account of how the same figure is to be observed frequently in artifacts and in nature, with a digression on growth forming a decussation of the central chapter. The composition is resumed with the description of the decussis in other natural forms and as a design in planting, then of its relation to certain geometrical forms and problems of physics. In chapter v Browne concludes his subject with a consideration of the number five in various aspects. As in *Hydriotaphia,* a coherent, logical plan is the basis of that imagery which ensures his unified treatment of a subject on divers planes.

The powerful effect of the contrasted images of the creation of sun and moon which open the first, the artificial, consideration of the decussis is heightened by the magnificent introduction of the natural consideration in the central chapter, the author in his search for truth leading the reader among the stars of heaven before lowering him to earth to find correspondent stars there:

> Could we satisfie ourselves in the position of the lights above, or discover the wisedom of that order so invariably maintained in the fixed Stars of heaven; Could we have any light, why the stellary part of the first masse, separated into this order, that the Girdle of Orion should ever maintain its line, and the two Starres in *Charles's* Wain never leave pointing at the Pole-starre, we might abate the *Pythagoricall* Musick of the Spheres, the sevenfold Pipe of *Pan;* and the strange Cryptography of *Gaffarel* in his starrie Booke of Heaven.
>
> But not to look so high as Heaven or the single Quincunx of the *Hyades* upon the neck of *Taurus,* the Triangle, and remarkable *Crusero* about the foot of the *Centaur;* observable rudiments there are hereof in subterraneous concretions, and bodies in the Earth. . . .

Before concluding the natural consideration, Browne brings us back to the creation of light with a reversal of the threefold invocation at the beginning. Twice the flight has been from heaven to earth. Now it is outwards, from the "perpetual shades" in which seeds lie through the balance of interchangeable light and darkness to the ultimate symbolism of life and death. The brief mystical consideration sustains the final crescendo with the fanfare of questions, and the "Quincunx of Heaven" illumines the conclusion. The influence of sun, moon, and all the heavenly bodies is expressed by other means than imagery: in the references to the character of Venus; to Saturn, planet and god of planting; to the groves of the sun; to the influence of the sun and moon on plants; to the reflection of sun and moon on water, and to the shadow of stars and moon; to the quincunx in relation to the signs of the zodiac, to astral physiognomy, astrology, chiromancy, and in numerous other minute allusions. Sun, planets, and stars are as vividly symbolic in their shadows as in the light which they give or reflect, for the very shadows conceal worlds alternately visible and invisible:

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[13] O. Leroy, *Le chevalier Thomas Browne (1605-82): Médecin, styliste et métaphysicien* (Paris, 1931), 250.

> Light that makes things seen, makes some things invisible, were it not for darknesse and the shadow of the earth, the noblest part of the Creation had remained unseen, and the Stars in heaven as invisible on the fourth day, when they were created above the Horizon, with the Sun, or there was not an eye to behold them. The greatest mystery of Religion is expressed by adumbration, and in the noblest part of Jewish Types, we find the Cherubims shadowing the Mercy-seat: Life itself is but the shadow of death, and souls departed but the shadows of the living: All things fall under this name. The Sunne itself is but the dark *simulachrum,* and light but the shadow of God.

Browne deepens the significance of the quincuncial symbol by associating it with the "right-lined circle" and "handled cross," symbolic variants meaningful in all three considerations of the quincunx and an adequate hieroglyph of plants and souls, of "the indivisible or divine, the divisible or corporeal, and that third, which was the *Systasis* or harmony of those two, in the mystical decussation."

A figurative importance on the three levels seems to be attached also to the name of Solomon who, like Methuselah in *Hydriotaphia,* is a presiding spirit, for he ranks with Cyrus as an "eminent Botanologer," unique among gardeners in his fame and magnificence and his traditional occult powers. Mention is made of the noble reticulate work of his temple pillars, "Lillies and Pomegranats upon a network ground." The name Solomon is present in the references, literal or mystical, to the Canticles, in the quotation from Ecclesiastes and in the delightful poetic enlargement of, and literal comment on, the quotation from the Song of Solomon:

> Some commend the exposure of these orders unto the Western gales, as the most generative and fructifying breath of heaven. But we applaud the Husbandry of *Solomon,* whereto agreeth the doctrine of *Theophrastus.* Arise O north winde, and blow thou South upon my garden, that the Spices thereof may flow out; For the north-winde closing the pores, and shutting up the *effluviums,* when the South doth after open and relax them; the Aromaticall gummes do drop, and sweet odours fly

> actively from them. And if his garden had the same situation, which mapps, and charts afford it, on the East side of *Jerusalem,* and having the wall on the west; these were the windes unto which it was well exposed.

Solomon figures in a pivotal image, rich in symbolic colours and poetic analogies, of which the full quality can only be discovered by taking it entire in its context of accurate description, conjectural remark, and matter-of-fact observation:

> The *Arbustetum* or Thicket on the head of the Teazell, may be observed in this order: And he that considereth that fabrick so regularly palisadoed, and stemm'd with flowers of the royall colour; in the house of the solitary maggot, may finde the Seraglio of *Solomon.* And contemplating the calicular shafts, and uncous disposure of their extremities, so accomodable unto the office of abstersion, not condemne as wholly improbable the conceit of those who accept it, for the herbe *Borith.* Where by the way, we could with much enquiry never discover any transfiguration, in this abstemious insect, although we have kept them long in their proper houses, and boxes. Where some wrapt up in their webbs, have lived upon their own bowels, from September unto July.

Another variation of a basic theme is his observation "how the needle of nature delighteth to work, even in low and doubtful vegetations," extending, perhaps, "that Elegant expression of Scripture 'Thou hast curiously embroydered me,' thou hast wrought me up after the finest way of Texture and as it were with a Needle."

Some of the most subtle and most "metaphysical" of all Browne's images are to be found in *The Garden of Cyrus,* from the description of maggots "in their *Aurelian* cases and swadling clouts," so perfectly illustrated by Blake's frontispiece for *The Gates of Paradise,* through the reference to the "five Brethren of the Rose," to the description of that dulled sense which, in sleep, "shakes hands with delectable odours; and though in the Bed of *Cleopatra,* can hardly with any delight raise up the ghost of a Rose."

Some images expand from a minute point to encompass a universe; others contract a world into an infinitesimal focal point as does this image of Hermetic connotation: "And therefore providence hath arched and paved the great house of the world, with colours of mediocrity, that is, blew and green, above and below the sight, moderately terminating the *acies* of the eye."

The imagery in *The Garden of Cyrus* leaves a total impression of creative achievement which is not diminished by emphasis on Browne's sources.[14] The distinction made by Mr. Chalmers, that

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[14] As, for example, J. S. Finch, "Sir Thomas Browne and the Quincunx" (*Studies in Philology,* XXXVII, 1940, 274-82).

Bacon minded the particular fact and Browne the general principle, appears to underlie the whole conception and success of this imagery.[15] Browne's scientific knowledge is rarely its subject-matter; more important is it that even the factual discussion of exact scientific data is not here isolated from other worlds, but has imaginative contact with remote fact and fiction. One may question the statement made by Mr. Cawley that Browne was "always more concerned with the microcosm than with the macrocosm."[16] Such a separation was impossible for Browne who illustrates in the imagery of *The Garden of Cyrus* how completely he saw man and the universe in terms of each other.

III

Hydriotaphia and *The Garden of Cyrus* contain few of the commonplace images of his age which are more frequent in *Religio Medici* and *Christian Morals.* In the latter compositions too are many more of the individual images of varying degrees of intensity, wittily manipulated from material fresh and old. Such images, though integral, are self-sufficient; the emblematic images belong to this type, and are independent of any co-ordinating imaginative conception.

Browne sometimes uses symbols with calculable connotations, ready to be played upon like the strings of an instrument. Of this kind are the ship image, as used in *Religio Medici* and *Christian Morals,* with its host of biblical associations from Noah's Ark to Christ on the Sea of Galilee; and the symbolical figure of Solomon, glorified in Old and New Testament poetry, and traditionally famous apart from the Bible as a natural scientist and necromancer, himself represented in and linked to the imagery of the stars by the star-like symbol of his Seal or Pentacle.[17]

The peak of Browne's imagery is reached in the creation of a framework formed by the reiteration of a symbol or an image in a variety of aspects under one dominant conception. In *Hydriotaphia* this is the urn-womb symbol; and it is the image of light in *The Garden of Cyrus.* A complexity of minor images contributes voices subordinate to the main theme. The fire and snow and the poppy images of *Hydriotaphia* echo obliquely the symbolical conception of life and death. In *The Garden of Cyrus,* this complexity is arrived at by the division of the central image into analogical triplicate reinforced by the use of a visual symbol of threefold significance and multiple associations.

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[15] G. K. Chalmers, "Sir Thomas Browne, True Scientist" (*Osiris,* II, 1936, 76).

[16] R. R. Cawley, "Sir Thomas Browne and His Reading" (*Publications of the Modern Language Association,* XLVIII, 1933, 429).

[17] For some account of the Solomon tradition, see Grillot de Givry, *Witchcraft, Magic and Alchemy,* trans. by J. C. Locke (London, 1940).

A survey of Browne's use of imagery reveals that, regarding each composition as a unit, quality of imagery is of far greater importance than quantity of imagery in its contribution to the fugato polyphony of his total effects. This fact has definite bearing on the relationship of imagery to rhythm in his prose. Browne has been simply described as having three rhythmic paces in his literary prose style: the "low" of *Pseudodoxia Epidemica,* the "medium" of *Religio Medici,* and the "high" of *Urn-Burial.*[18] The description might be amplified by relating the rhythmic flow directly to the qualitative use of imagery, for the tempo, of course, varies greatly within the compositions. *Religio Medici* reaches its rhythmic peaks in such individual passages as that on "Man that great and true *Amphibium"* or "For there is a musick," though here a more constant level is maintained by reason of the unscientific nature of the main subject, and the rather even dispersal of the imagery. *Hydriotaphia*, after the first three paragraphs, relaxes into the pace of *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* which is maintained until the third chapter. With the increasing emphasis on the symbolical antithesis, the tempo quickens until the climax is reached in the poignant description of the great Amphibium. *The Garden of Cyrus* has a double climax, that of the image near the end of chapter IV, and that of the symbol in the conclusion. Both are matched by a rhythmic pace which rarely drops in the preceding chapters to the "lowest" level even of *Hydriotaphia.* This inevitable synchronization of rhythm and imagery gives support to and is supported by Herbert Read's observation on the profundity of rhythm: "It is born, not with the words, but with the thought, and with whatever confluence of instincts and emotions the thought is accompanied."[19] Naturally, most critical emphasis has been placed on the climactic passages so tempting to quote, to the exclusion of the plain style, often charming in its rhythmic clarity; but both are used at their true value by Browne, with an infinite number of gradations between in accordance with his use of imagery.

All the worlds of Sir Thomas Browne meet, in varying degrees of emphasis, in his principal literary works. The most perfectly coordinated conception belongs to those two in which the world of science balances most nearly with the world of imagination.

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[18] E. L. Parker, "The Cursus in Sir Thomas Browne" (*PMLA,* LIII, 1938, 1053).

[19] H. Read, *English Prose Style* (London, 1928), 65.

FINAL CAUSES IN THE AGE OF REASON

ROBERT MCRAE

THE story has often enough been told of how the seventeenth-century founders of modern science repudiated the use of final causes, of purposes, ends or aims, in the explanation of physical phenomena. The scientist's concern was with *how* nature worked, to seek out those "inexorable and immutable laws," as Galileo called them, which govern nature's operations. The reasons *why*, or the purposes of nature, were no longer any part of the scientist's business. Nature cares nothing, says Galileo, "whether her abstruse reasons . . . be or be not exposed to the capacity of men."[1] Descartes is no less clear on the point. He lays it down that "we shall not seek for the reason of natural things from the end which God or nature has set before him in their creation; for we should not take so much upon ourselves as to believe that God could take us into his counsels."[2] Galileo and Descartes are agreed that nature's purposes are inscrutable. Bacon adds another reason for excluding them from inquiry, namely, that final causes are useless for the production of works, which for him is the true aim of natural science. "The inquisition of final causes," he tells us, "is sterile, and like a virgin consecrated to God, produces nothing."[3]

In his book entitled *The Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Physical Science,* Professor Burtt puts two lengthy quotations beside one another. One is taken from Dante's *Divine Comedy* and the other from Lord Russell's *A Free Man's Worship*. This unusual apposition of authors is intended to reveal the contrast between the teleologically ordered universe of the philosophers of the Middle Ages and the mechanical universe of the new science from which all purposes have been excluded. "Amid such a world," says Lord Russell of the latter, "if anywhere, our ideals henceforward must find a home. That man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms . . . that the whole temple of Man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruins—all these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain, that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand. Only within the scaffolding of these truths, only on the firm foundation of unyielding despair, can the soul's habitation henceforth be safely built. . . . "[4]

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[1] Letter to the Grand Duchess Christine; quoted in J. H. Randall, *The Making of the Modern Mind* (Boston, 1940), 239.

[2] *Principles of Philosophy,* I, xxviii.

[3] Quoted by F. H. Anderson, *The Philosophy of Francis Bacon* (Chicago, 1948), 158.

[4] E. A. Burtt, *The Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Physical Science* (New York, 1927), 9.

I

Whether or not this is the eventual outcome of the materialism and repudiation of final causes of the new science of the seventeenth century, Lord Russell's picture is most certainly not one which would have been acceptable to the founders of that science. It was not until the second half of the eighteenth century, in the fashionable salons of Paris, among the friends of Baron Holbach, that such an account might have received a sympathetic hearing. Even then, these cheerful salon atheists would have found Lord Russell's "unyielding despair" rather more heroic than our circumstances demand. The truth is that, apart from Spinoza, there was not a single philosopher or scientist of any importance who denied the existence of final causes in the world. It is true that final causes had been banished from the science of physics, but they had not been banished from the cosmology and natural theology which some philosophers at least did not hesitate to construct on the basis of that physics.

The enthusiasm which accompanied the revival of the corpuscular philosophy of Democritus, Epicurus, and Lucretius stopped precisely at the point where these ancient philosophers had denied purpose or design in nature and had attributed everything to chance. It was at this point that admiration often turned to ridicule. What could be more obvious, it was thought, than the final causation which is actually implied by the doctrine of atoms and the void? Bacon who admired Democritus as the greatest of ancient philosophers, and strongly approved his removal of final causes from physical inquiries, yet writes: "That school which is most accused of atheism doth most demonstrate religion; that is the school of Leucippus, and Democritus, and Epicurus; for it is a thousand times more credible that four unstable elements and one immutable fifth essence, duly and eternally placed, need no God, than that an army of infinite small portions, or seeds unplaced, should have produced this order and beauty without a divine marshall."[5]

It was over the denial of final causation that Gassendi, chief of the votaries of ancient atomism, parted company with his master, Epicurus. For, while he agreed with Bacon and Descartes that final causes have no place in the physical sciences, yet he insists that they remain the object of legitimate inquiry in natural theology. Many of the evidences of God's purposes in nature are exposed to the view of all the world. When later on Newton had succeeded for the popular mind in bringing the corpuscular philosophy of the ancients to its perfection, enthusiastic Newtonians (such as Clarke, Hume, and Kant) unite in calling the Epicurean hypothesis "ridiculous" and "manifestly absurd"—referring, of course, not to the atomism, but to the doctrine of chance.

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[5] *Essays,* XVI, "Of Atheism."

The general attitude is expressed most clearly by Voltaire in his *Philosophical Dictionary* as he outlines the history of atomism. "Epicurus and Lucretius," he writes, "admitted atoms and the void; Gassendi supported this doctrine and Newton demonstrated it. . . . In this Epicurus and Lucretius appear to have been true philosophers. . . . But when Epicurus afterwards tells us that his atoms declined in the void by chance; that this declination formed men and animals by chance; that the eyes were placed in the upper part of the head, and the feet at the end of the legs by chance; that ears were not given to hear, but that the declination of atoms having fortuitously composed ears, men fortuitously made use of them to hear with —this madness, called physics, has very justly been turned into ridicule."[6]

Not only is it the case that final causes are *not* eliminated from the cosmological picture, but it may be said that finalism actually attains an extravagant silliness in the Age of Reason that has never been surpassed. Here are some examples gathered by Cassirer from the works of the philosopher Wolff. "What is the use of daylight?" it is asked. "Daylight is of great use to us; for by daylight we can easily go about our duties, which we can either not perform at all at night, or at least not so easily, and at some expense, since it is necessary to make it light by art." Night, too, of course, "has its obvious use, that men and animals who have become tired during the day can refresh themselves again through sleep. But it serves also for some pursuits that cannot be carried on by day, like catching birds and fish."[7] What could be more edifying than the observations of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre that "dogs are usually of two opposite colours, the one light and the other dark, in order that, wherever they may be in the house, they may be distinguished from the furniture, with the colour of which they might be confounded. . . . Wherever fleas are, they jump on white colours. This instinct has been given them that we may the more easily catch them." "The melon has been divided into sections by nature for family eating," and "the pumpkin, being larger, can be eaten with one's neighbours."[8]

Voltaire obviously had an immense field here in which to exercise his gifts of satire, and, indeed, set against such examples, Dr. Pangloss's masterstroke that "noses are made to bear spectacles" reveals that joyful teleologist to be no caricature at all. But, although Voltaire wrote *Candide,* he was, as we have already seen, himself an unshakable adherent of final causes.

The history of the arguments for the existence of God shows that in the eighteenth century the teleological argument, or argument from design in nature, vastly overshadows the other two great traditional arguments (the ontological and the cosmological). Hume and Kant dispose of the latter as sophistries which can never have any influence on belief, while both acknowledge with immense respect the convincing force of the argument from design upon "the man in the street as well as the most subtle thinker." The authority with which these two philosophers spoke of its compelling effect can be gauged by means of Bishop Butler's *The Analogy of Religion*. This most eminent of the treatises of Natural Religion to appear in the eighteenth century is written in defence of Christianity against those who have made it "a principal subject of mirth and ridicule." It is not written against atheists, for they were not a significant body, but against deists. It is strikingly evident to a modern reader that throughout the discussion Bishop Butler is able, absolutely and without reflection, to rely on the recognition by his opponents that there are manifest elements of design in nature, indicating a designing mind. Final causes in nature are the bed-rock on which Butler's *Analogy* rests, and he knows that this is the common ground on which all his readers meet. There is obviously no need for him to argue the point.

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[6] *Philosophical Dictionary,* "Atoms."

[7] Ernst Cassirer, *Rousseau—Kant—Goethe* (Princeton, N.J., 1945), 66-7.

[8] Quoted by Paul Janet, *Final Causes* (New York, 1889), 495.

So strong did Hume regard the force of the teleological argument on the human mind that this most notorious and radical sceptic of the eighteenth century considered atheism to be a psychological impossibility. Diderot is one source for the story that "Hume dîna avec une grande compagnie chez le Baron d'Holbach. Il était assis à côté du Baron; on parla de la religion naturelle; 'Pour les Athées,' disait Hume, 'je ne crois pas qu'il en existe; je n'en ai jamais vu.' 'Vous avez été un peu malheureux,' répondit l'autre, 'vous voici à table avec dix-sept pour la première fois.' "[9]

While Holbach may have regarded the Scotsman as agreeably naïve, Hume, we know, had a scepticism far more subtle and extensive than the Baron's. Holbach was a dogmatist, Hume an empiricist. Here the question naturally arises, how far could a good British empiricist advance in speculations about the universe as a whole, such as are involved in any theory of final causes? In his *Essay* Locke had set very strict limits to human knowledge. But however much metaphysics had suffered as a result of Locke's inquiry, we find that cosmological speculation continued to flourish freely, even with Hume, who was a far more radical empiricist than Locke. The reason for this lay in the fact that the method employed in such speculations was analogy—and analogy was regarded as a legitimate inductive method. Locke had laid it down that "in things which sense cannot discover, Analogy is the great rule of probability."[10] Locke himself supplies a pleasing example of the application of analogy for one of the more important cosmological conceptions of his time—the Great Chain of Being, or Principle of Plenitude. "Observing," he says, "such gradual and gentle descents downwards in those parts of the creation that are beneath man, the rule of analogy may make it probable that it is so also in things above us and our observation; and that there are several ranks of intelligent beings, excelling us in several degrees of perfection, ascending upwards towards the infinite perfection of the Creator, by gentle steps and differences, that are everyone at no great distance from the next to it."[11] I cite this as an example of how cosmological speculation could respectably proceed.

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[9] Quoted by N. K. Smith, ed., *Hume's Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* (London, 1947), 38.

[10] *Essay Concerning Human Understanding,* IV, xvi, 12.

There are several kinds of teleology which at different times different philosophers have entertained. The teleology generally prevailing in the eighteenth century is not that of Aristotle, nor that of Whitehead. To understand its special nature we must look to the analogue or analogues on which it was based, and seek out the reasons why those analogues were chosen. Perhaps the three most recurrent ones which we find turning up in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were: (1) a literary composition such as the *Iliad*—following here the example of Cicero in his argument against the atomists, (2) the house, and (3) the machine, especially the clock. The reason for choosing the *Iliad* as an analogue of the universe is easily discernible. That reason is, of course, the corpuscular philosophy, for letters are the atoms out of which literary compositions are formed, and presumably never formed by chance. But the house and clock are the great favourites in the age of universal mechanism for they are mechanical products. Thus Boyle likens the world to the great clock at Strasbourg. "For that hypothesis"—"the corpuscularian philosophy" as he calls it—supposes "the whole universe (the soul of man excepted) to be but a great Automaton or self-moving engine, wherein all things are performed by the bare motion (or rest), the size, the shape, and the situation or texture of the parts of the universal matter it consists of. . . ."[12]

Mechanism and teleology are sometimes presented as though they were antithetical concepts. Any clock shows that this is not the case. A clock runs on purely mechanical principles, and is at the same time a teleological system, i.e., one designed to fulfil a purpose. However, wherever mechanism is subordinated to purposes, it always gives rise to one particular kind of teleological system—precisely that kind which is found in a clock. The mechanists of this period, finding in nature what seemed to them obviously to be teleological systems, namely, animal organisms, and maintaining at the same time that the laws of nature were entirely mechanical, were compelled to regard animals and even our own bodies as machines. And this is precisely what Descartes and Hobbes at the beginning of the period proceeded to do. The next step was to proceed from the part to the whole. Here Descartes himself was cautious: "I have described the earth," he says, "as if it were simply a machine."[13] The "as if" tends to disappear after Descartes. The world *is* a machine.

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[11] *Ibid.*

[12] *Works* (London, 1772), IV, 49.

One very important feature of machine teleology is the fact that machines involve a designer and a constructor who exist apart from the machine. Hence, if the whole of nature is a machine, we must conclude that God is a great Artificer; and this, indeed, is a description which Descartes attaches to God, and which became generally popular. Newton, having reasons for thinking the universe not to be stable, even conceives the great Artificer as continually servicing and adjusting the machine. This evoked Leibniz' scorn.

> Mr. Newton and his followers have an extremely odd opinion of the work of God. According to them God has to wind up his watch from time to time. Otherwise it would cease to go. He lacked sufficient foresight to make it a perpetual motion. This machine of God's is even so imperfect that He is obliged from time to time to come to its assistance . . . and clean it and even to mend it, as a clock-maker might his handiwork; and the less skillful the workman is, the more often is he obliged to rehandle and correct his work.[14]

We hear much of the distinction made in the eighteenth century between nature and art. For the machine teleology this distinction really loses its force. Nature *is* art. Voltaire's "Nature," speaking in dialogue form with the philosopher, protests: "I have had a name bestowed upon me that does not at all suit me: I am called nature, while I am all art."[15] Even Hobbes describes nature as "the art whereby God hath made and governs the world," and goes on to speak of "Nature's Artificer."[16] Much discussion of the beauty of nature in the eighteenth century suggests that it is really the beauty of a machine which philosophers sometimes discerned in nature, for beauty, they would say, lies in proportion and proportions are true "only as they are relative to some certain use or end, their aptitude and subordination to which makes them please and charm." Here nature is admired on exactly the same grounds as those on which a clock might be admired.

II

It was unlikely that any such doctrine as this, that natural teleology is machine teleology, should go on indefinitely uncriticized. It is true that the clearest and best statement of it was yet to come, in Paley's *Natural Theo-*

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[13] *Principles,* IV, clxxxviii.

[14] "Correspondence with Clarke, Leibniz' First Paper," in Leibniz, *Philosophical Writings* (Everyman's Library, 1934), 192.

[15] *Philosophical Dictionary,* "Nature."

[16] *Leviathan,* Introduction.

logy and *Evidences,* where the argument is so skilfully and patiently presented that it conveys the impression of the greatest possible common sense; it is true also that Paley enjoyed a tremendous vogue throughout the nineteenth century. Nevertheless in the second half of the eighteenth century the doctrine that natural teleology is machine teleology came under the scrutiny of the two greatest critical philosophers of the time, Hume and Kant. It is safe to say that, after them, it is never entertained again by any serious philosopher. Since Hume is the first of these critics, I propose to look at his discussion of teleology, most of which is contained in his *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion.*

Hume never doubts that purposiveness is present in nature, and he thinks that this purposiveness is so obvious that it "strikes everywhere the most careless, the most stupid thinker; and no man can be so hardened in absurd systems, as at all times to reject it."[17] He points out that the natural scientist accepts it in one of his leading methodological principles, namely, that nature does nothing in vain. This principle, for example, is the very foundation of the Copernican theory. And we know that the anatomist, when he comes upon a new organ, never rests content until he has discovered its use or function.

> It is with pleasure I hear Galen reason concerning the structure of the human body. The anatomy of man, says he, discovers above 600 different muscles; and whoever duly considers these, will find that in each of them nature must have adjusted at least ten different circumstances, in order to attain the end which she proposed; proper figure, just magnitude, right disposition of the several ends, upper and lower position of the whole, the due insertion of the several nerves, veins, and arteries. So that in the muscles alone, above 6,000 several views and intentions must have been formed and executed. The bones he calculates to be 284: The distinct purposes aimed at in the structure of each, above forty. What a prodigious display of artifice, even in these simple and homogeneous parts? But if we consider the skin, ligaments, vessels, glandules, humours, the several limbs and members of the body; how must our astonishment rise upon us, in proportion to the number and intricacy of the parts so artificially adjusted? The farther we advance in these researches, we discover new scenes of art and wisdom. . . .[18]

Hume directs himself primarily to the question: "What is the origin of this purposiveness in the world?" This, as we shall see, inevitably involves him in another question: "What is the nature of this purposiveness?"

In trying to answer the first of these questions the only method at Hume's disposal is the method of analogy. As a thorough-going empiricist, he will not, of course, permit any *a priori* argument. We must begin with what is given in experience, and proceed by analogy to the universe as a whole. It must be recognized, however, that there are difficulties peculiar to the use of analogy in dealing with the problem before us. Let us look first at one of the standard analogical arguments, that which sets out to prove that the source of organization in the universe is a designing mind. As presented by Cleanthes in the *Dialogues* it runs like this:

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[17] *Hume's Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion,* 214.
[18] *Ibid.,* 215.

> Look round the world: Contemplate the whole and every part of it: You will find it to be nothing but one great machine, subdivided into an infinite number of lesser machines, which again admit of subdivisions, to a degree beyond what human faculties and senses can trace and explain. All these various machines, and even their most minute parts, are adjusted to each other with an accuracy, which ravishes into admiration all men, who have ever contemplated them. The curious adapting of means to ends, throughout all nature, resembles exactly, though it much exceeds, the productions of human contrivance; of human design, thought, wisdom, and intelligence. Since therefore the effects resemble each other, we are led to infer, by all the rules of analogy, that the causes also resemble; and that the Author of nature is somewhat similar to the mind of man. . . .[19]

Now for the difficulties. First, the conclusions of analogy are strongest, says Hume, where the cases are exactly similar. Where the similarity is less, the force of the analogy is proportionately weaker. If you come upon a new house, you can infer with the highest degree of probability that it had an architect or builder, because houses are like one another in being houses, and experience has taught us that houses have architects and builders for their cause. On the other hand the resemblance of the universe to a house is not immediately a great one. Any argument by analogy from cause of a house to cause of the universe is just as strong as, and no stronger than, that resemblance. We must, then, determine how greatly the element of purposiveness in nature resembles that in a house or a machine. Is it the same kind of purposiveness?

Secondly, this argument of Cleanthes proceeds by analogy from a part of the universe to the universe as a whole. The universe as a whole displays a tremendous diversity of parts and of principles of operation, and one small part of this universe consists of the products of human reason and contrivance. On what grounds can we claim this particular part of nature as the clue to the whole? "What peculiar privilege" has it, asks Hume, "that we must make it the model of the whole universe?"

A third difficulty in the argument by analogy arises from the fact there is only one God and one universe. Houses are a species and architects are a species. Experience shows us that the two are causally connected. That is why, when I see a new house, I can infer an architect. But such inference is impossible when the objects, like God and the universe, are "single, individual, without parallel or specific resemblance."

[19] *Ibid.,* 143.

Hume's conclusion is that, strictly speaking, we have "no *data* for establishing any system of cosmogony."[20] Our very limited experience "can afford us no probable conjecture" about the whole of reality. Why, then, does Hume pursue the subject any further? The answer is this. Purposiveness in nature forces itself, according to Hume, upon the minds of even the stupidest and most inattentive. And there is what he called a "natural propensity" in us, in reflecting upon it, to consider it as analogous to something else which we think we already understand. Human nature is such that we find ourselves compelled to try to form some theory which will explain this purposiveness. It is a cardinal principle with Hume that we never run counter to the demands of human nature. So he concludes: "If we must needs fix on some hypothesis; by what rule, pray, ought we to determine our choice?" This means, in effect, what analogy are we going to employ? Does an artificial machine provide an adequate analogy?

Experience has shown us that minds can be the source of organization in matter. An architect can form the plan of a house in his mind, and then put together stone, mortar, and wood in accordance with his plan so that all the parts are adjusted to an end or purpose. The clock-maker can similarly put bits of inert matter together to compose a watch. In such cases, where mind is the source of the form or organization in the matter, the form or organization is imposed on the matter from without. The cause of the form is external to the object.

At this point Hume turns his attention to mind, this possible transcendental source of organization. Hume's theory of mind is particularly notorious, partly, perhaps, because the historians of philosophy have bothered only with the purely negative and destructive part of it, which reads like this: "When I enter most intimately into what I call *myself,* I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never can catch myself at any time without a perception and never can observe anything but the perception." He concludes that the mind is "nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed one another with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement."[21] The conception of the mind or self, which Hume was thus disposing of, is the Cartesian one, according to which the soul is a simple, indivisible substance. Hume maintained that introspective experience reveals no such monadic existent. That is as far as most historians of philosophy go with Hume. That is the part they seem to like. But he himself went on to find some alternative theory of the nature of mind, and his conclusion, briefly, is that the mind, rather than having the identity of a simple substance, has the kind of identity which is possessed by organisms. In an organism the parts may be undergoing change continuously while the identity of the whole remains undestroyed. The identity in a developing organism lies in that structure determining the causal interaction between the parts, whereby they serve a common end or purpose. "This is the case," says Hume, "with all animals and vegetables; where not only the several parts have a reference to some general purpose, but also a mutual dependence and connexion with each other. The effect of so strong a relation is that, though . . . in a very few years both vegetables and animals endure a total change, yet we still attribute identity to them, while their form, size, and substance are entirely altered."[22] For Hume, then, the mind is just such an organic entity, and undergoes generation and development like other organic entities in nature.

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[20] *Ibid.,* 177.

[21] *Treatise of Human Nature,* ed. by L. A. Selby-Bigge (Oxford, 1896), 252.

Our original question was: "What is the source of organization in nature?" The answer given by the mechanist-teleologist was that it is mind. But now we see that the mind itself is an organized entity. Our question applies, therefore, as much to the mind itself as to the other parts of nature. Now, says Hume, you cannot say that the mind is the source of the organization of mind, in the same way that you can say that it is the source of organization in a machine, or you get into an infinite regression like the Indian philosopher and his elephant. You would have one mind being put together by another mind, and it in turn being put together by yet another mind, and so on, *ad infinitum*.

To avoid the absurd consequences of making an external and transcendent mind the source of organization, whether in minds themselves or in any other natural organic entities, Hume suggests the possibility of there being such a thing as an internal principle of organization in these entities—that the mind may be a self-organizing entity and that animals, and vegetables, and the rest of nature may be self-organizing also.

Hume has then proposed that we distinguish two different kinds of finality or purposiveness: on the one hand a transcendental finality, in which the source of organization is external to the object, as in clocks and other products of artifice; and on the other hand, an immanent finality, where the source of organization is internal, as in the case of natural organisms and minds themselves. There is no *a priori* ground for confining ourselves to clock-teleology, and denying that there can be any other kind. Because *some* alterations in nature are the effects of artifice, can we conclude that therefore *all* are?

Hume anticipates an inevitable objection which would be brought against the hypothesis of immanent finality, namely, that it is entirely unintelligible. He counters this objection by pointing out that the operation of the mind in creating a design to impose on matter is equally unintelligible.

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[22] *Ibid.*, 257.

Both of these kinds of creative activity are wholly mysterious. Now, since our conception of the universe as a whole is to be formed by analogy with some part of nature which falls within our experience—however dubious the method of analogy may be—why choose the machine as the basis for analogy?

> I affirm [says Hume], that there are other parts of the universe (besides the machines of human invention) which bear still a greater resemblance to the fabric of the world, and which therefore afford a better conjecture concerning the universal origins of this system. These parts are animals and vegetables. The world plainly resembles more an animal or a vegetable, than it does a watch or knitting-loom. Its cause, therefore, it is more probable, resembles the cause of the former. The cause of the former is generation or vegetation. The cause, therefore, of the world, we may infer to be something similar or analogous to generation or vegetation.[23]

In support of this suggestion Hume outlines a quite fanciful cosmogonic hypothesis, in accordance with which the present organization of the universe is the product of evolution.

On what grounds are we to prefer the hypothesis of organism to the machine hypothesis? Hume gives two: (1) Experience supplies us with far more instances of the products of generation and vegetation, where there is no evidence of intention on the part of the agents, than it does instances of the products of reason and contrivance. (2) "Judging by our limited and imperfect experience, generation has some privileges above reason: For we see everyday the latter arise from the former, never the former from the latter."[24] We have experience of reason as the outcome of growth and development; we know of no instances of mind making growth. And Hume suggests that if that complex organization which we call mind emerges in a process of development, it cannot be put back at the beginning to account for that development, in the way that it is present at the beginning of the construction of a machine.

III

Whatever the philosophic merits of Hume's *Dialogues*—a subject on which opinion has varied from contempt to the highest praise—they have an historical importance which is not often pointed out, and that is their influence on German Romantic philosophers. It is not, of course, the case that the German Romantics read Hume's *Dialogues* for inspiration. But Kant read them, and as a consequence reformulated the problems of teleology in his *Critique of Teleological Judgment*. Here he embodies and develops further the distinctions made by Hume between the teleology of a machine and natural teleology. Kant's internal purposiveness becomes the immanent finality of the Hegelians, and if the story is traced to our own times it brings us to Bergson, Whitehead, Alexander, and the emergent evolutionists. The legacies which Hume left as a result of his criticisms of the classical machine teleology were the conceptions of ends which work themselves out in nature, of a world which is organic, of development and therefore time as a principal category in understanding reality, of nature as creative activity, rather than as finished product of a Demiurge, who put it together according to a pre-existing plan. If, as has been said, the vegetable supplies so many metaphors for Romantic philosophers, then Hume contributed no small share to the beginning of it all when he supplanted the clock with the vegetable.

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[23] *Hume's Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion,* 176-7.
[24] *Ibid.,* 180.

Letters in Canada: 1949

Edited by J. R. MacGillivray

Of this fifteenth annual survey of "Letters in Canada" very little need be said in introduction. As in the two previous years and occasionally before that, it has been found necessary to hold over the survey of French-Canadian and New-Canadian literature until the July number. Once again I would express my thanks to the publishers of Canadian books for their friendly co-operation; to the University of Toronto Library for assistance; and to Miss Francess Halpenny, Assistant Editor of the University of Toronto Press, for searching out and collecting the books and for preparing all the check-lists except the one for New-Canadian letters.

Part I: English-Canadian Letters

I. POETRY

E. K. Brown

The poetry of 1949 is less striking than in any year since "Letters in Canada" began. The poverty is unlikely to persist, and is not wholly unwelcome to one reader: it gives me a chance that I have hoped for, space for an attempt to see the poetry of the past fifteen years in brief perspective.

These years are among the most interesting in the development of Canadian poetry. In retrospect the landmarks seem unmistakable. With *The Titanic* in 1935, and again with *Brébeuf and His Brethren* in 1940, E. J. Pratt appeared at the height of his power in versification, organization, and interpretation. Nothing in the praise given these poems in "Letters in Canada" now appears excessive. In 1950 Pratt's reputation is even more secure than it was when these surveys began. I grow tired of hearing the charge that his writing is not in the main stream of modern verse; of course it is not, but should anyone care? What is wrong with most poetry that falls outside the main stream is that it imitates without enrichment some old formula. Pratt imitates nothing: his best poetry offers a strong pleasure not to be found in any other writing, past or present. The publication in 1936 of *New Provinces* associated with Pratt, Robert Finch, Leo Kennedy, A. M. Klein, F. R. Scott, and A. J. M. Smith. The importance of this small anthology was emphasized in "Letters in Canada: 1936": "It marks the emergence before the general readers of the country (others have followed the tendency for some years in magazines with relatively small circulation) of a group of poets who may well have as vivifying an effect on Canadian poetry as the Group of Seven had on Canadian painting." All that now seems at fault in that judgment was the implication that "general readers" would look into the anthology. Few of them did. It sold slowly; the publisher did not push it very hard; and it was not as widely discussed as it might have been.

But *New Provinces* is a landmark. The poets it introduced have been the authors of a number of the most interesting collections in the interval between 1936 and the present; and their mark is upon the best books by other experimental writers that have come out in this period. The *New Provinces* poets have not been widely read; they have not counted for much in the general culture of the country. This is because of their language, which they did not devise but share with most of the best contemporary poets in the United States and some in England. This, much more than the sometimes bewildering irregularity of their prosodic patterns, or their preference of myth to lyricism, or their occasionally uncompromising subtlety or learning, is what scares away the larger audience. The boldness with language is not only easy to account for, it is practically inevitable. Conservative critics in the universities, and more vociferously in the newspapers (where the reviewing of poetry is usually in weak hands) have been saying that the experiments are not only unattractive but gratuitous, and should be called off. They cannot be called off. There is no direct way back to the quarries from which earlier poets drew their marble. Sooner or later another quarry will be found where the marble is of superb quality. Then poets will no longer concern themselves so much in experimenting with language; they will take idiom more or less (although never entirely) for granted, and without the noisy heaving and straining that have been so characteristic of the past fifteen years in Canada, they will express their impressions, feelings, and ideas in a way that can be more generally shared.

Already there are signs that the period of extreme concentration on linguistic experiment is passing. *The Rocking Chair*—another landmark—is much more accessible than Klein's earlier verse. Earle Birney and Dorothy Livesay, owing a good deal to the kind of poetry the *New Provinces* men wrote, although not perhaps to any individual poet, have repeatedly combined with a sensitive use of language a set of feelings and ideas that can be apprehended with no great effort. In less profuse language, and with less rendering of feeling, Anne Marriott and P. K. Page have done the same. The rich imaginative force of Patrick Anderson may perhaps take the same path.

What lies ahead in poetry is probably a period of less myopic concern with the medium, more interest in structure, and a wider range of impressions, feelings, and ideas. Perhaps the audience for good poetry may grow in Canada (the C.B.C. is at last in a faltering way beginning to do something that may be helpful); but I am not persuaded. The culture of English

Canada is becoming more and more a culture founded on the social sciences; even the physical scientists, who are likely to absorb most of the first-rate minds in this and the next generation, are turning to the social sciences rather than to the humanities as they enlarge their interests, and their awareness of responsibility.

The distance between the kinds of good poetry written today and the kinds that seemed experimental twenty-five years ago is made plain by a reading of the *Collected Poems* of Raymond Knister, edited by Dorothy Livesay. Knister died in 1932. In the last six years of his life he wrote prose fiction. As early as 1926 he "collected and revised" his poems, intending to publish them under the characteristic and delightful title "Windfalls for Cider." What is now printed is the book he put together: his poetical works collected, but not complete, an author's own sifting. Dorothy Livesay who knew him well has written a substantial and infinitely illuminating study of his personality and work, the best of her critical essays on poetry.[1] She takes Knister as a case of the experimental author denied a hearing in Canada—most of his poems came out in *The Midland*—and as a case of the lonely artist committed, partly by temperament and partly by circumstance, to introspection of a tragic cast. Although she does not explicitly say that his drowning was suicide, suicide is the natural ending for the person and the life Miss Livesay has described.

The poems do not seem to me as pervasively good as they do to the editor. Some are good; and these are more than enough to justify the publication of the book—it is not a mere work of piety, but an enrichment of our useable tradition. Knister is at his best when he is recording the aspect of a thing, an animal, or a person, and his own response to this. He had most sensitive perceptions, and an exquisite awareness of the form that would convey them. "A Row of Horse Stalls," ten poems that originally appeared in *This Quarter,* are delightful renderings of perception. But, introspective and brooding, he often could not stop with rendering his perceptions and his delight in them: he was impelled to add what he thought, and this he did not often manage with any height of economy or insight. The first poem in the collection, "The Plowman," has much to say about furrows, and no poet has known them more intimately. The next to last stanza runs:

> The horses are very patient
> When I tell myself
> This time
> The ultimate unflawed turning
> Is before my share,
> They must give up their rest.

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[1] Miss Livesay is mistaken in listing the now eminent Jamesian scholar Leon Edel among the poets.

Already the movement from aspect to symbol makes one uncomfortable. Then, with what seems to me a thumping heaviness the poem ends:

> Someday, someday, be sure,
> I shall turn the furrow of all my hopes
> But I shall not, doing it, look backward.

This is what we could have done for ourselves, with the dominant image of the furrow clearly set in the earlier parts of the poem; and doing it for ourselves we would have done it to much better effect.

Poetry written today on Knister's sort of subjects would have more implicitness; and it would not be denied a hearing. There are at least three magazines in Canada where poems of quality, no matter how unlike the styles in vogue, would be not only printed, but prized.

Charm in rendering the aspect of things and people also marks *Invitation to Mood,* by Carol Coates, a collection in the same vein as her chap-book of 1939, *Fancy Free*.[2] The distinctive thing in her poetry is admirably described by Professor Thorlief Larsen in a few paragraphs which might well have been promoted from the jacket to a place in the body of the book. Her characteristic form is the *hokku,* adapted to the opportunities and limitations of English, and in some degree to the personal modes of the poet's feelings. Mr. Larsen rightly notes: "When one has read four or five of these poems the rhythms become established in the mind, so to speak, and one comes to expect them just as one does the rhythms of conventional verse." What needs to be added is that one remains conscious that the rhythms established are novel, and there follows a pleasant blending of confidence in pattern, and awareness of its strangeness. In Miss Coates's poems everything is clear and sharp when she is at her best—the pictures as clear and sharp as Raymond Knister's, although not so strong. The form loses its appropriateness and becomes a vexation when the content is vague (as in the closing section called "Transcendental Mood"), or the tone ambitious (as in the tribute to Winston Churchill, "Chosen of Men").

Almost every one of the forty-two poems in Mr. James Reaney's *The Red Heart* is interesting. A few are trivial; a few unconsidered; almost all the rest uneven.

The first group called "The Plum Tree" is the most satisfactory. These poems, like those in the second group "The School Globe," are evocations of moments in the poet's experience as child and boy in Stratford, Ontario. Mr. Reaney's use of nature centres in the sky—his titles prepare one for this, "The Clouds," "The Sun Dogs," "Suns and Planets," "The Heart and the Sun," "Clouds." The sky is what cannot be reached, and what matters most. The imagery is strong, without being rich or intricate: the sky, in Mr. Reaney's universe, does not need to be rendered with complexity or nuance. In other poems of this first group there is almost constant reference to things that fall—in the first poem, admirably chosen for its place:

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[2] No poems from *Fancy Free* are reprinted in the new collection; but happily it does contain a dozen of the best poems from a hand-produced limited edition brought out in 1941.

> In the opium-still noon they hang or fall
> The plump ripe plums.
> I suppose my little sister died
> Dreaming of looking up at them. . . .
> And there is no listener, no hearer
> For the small thunders of their falling.

This is Mr. Reaney at his best. Unless something is dropping the world is ruled by ennui: nothing initiated on its surface has significance, or intensity. The droppings from the sky have intensity, but what their significance may be, the poems do not suggest.

The sense of ennui is everywhere in the collection. Mr. Reaney appears to be vulnerable to boredom beyond any other Canadian who has taken to writing. I can understand how one might be bored by living in Stratford, but not how one can found a poetic career on it. The intensity with which he can be bored has enabled him to achieve a few striking passages, but a lyric poet who is prone to be bored is very much like a producer with a boring character in his cast: the audience is likely to miss the fine strokes of characterization in a general effect of ennui. In the later parts of *The Red Heart* the boredom is relieved by wit, but the wit of a really bored person is likely to be forced. "The Great Lakes Suite" is a would-be witty sequence, but the effect, if it is achieved at all, seems much too trivial for a book. In general Mr. Reaney's wit is trivial, and appears to come from the shallows rather than the depths. T. S. Eliot has linked with the mood of boredom, the mood of horror and the mood of glory. Mr. Reaney links with his boredom horror. He finds horror especially in the fact of physical death and in the sexual interests of ordinary people (he has a strong sense of the difference between ordinary and extraordinary in everything), perhaps of all people except himself and those who love him. I do not think that his poetry of horror comes off as well as his poetry of boredom: but it will more and more, perhaps, be Mr. Reaney's principal "line." As to the mood of glory—there is none of that.

The Red Heart is the first collection of a young poet. It reads so. It leaves one eager to see the next.

So does a smaller book, the most interesting of the "Ryerson Poetry Chap-Books," Thomas Saunders' *Scrub Oak*. This is poetry very much after the earlier manner of Robert Frost, that is to say, after one of the best manners in the poetry of this century. Robert Frost has always been absorbed in the people and the places of his own New England, but the absorption has not blunted his interest in the general nature and plight of man. Thomas Saunders, who writes from Winnipeg, is absorbed in the people and the places of rural Manitoba. He renders them with power, with a fine balance between sympathetic insight and stern detachment. This is a harsh world, somewhat like the world of F. P. Grove's western novels; and the modes of writing that Robert Frost has used for the harsh world of Vermont and New Hampshire suit it. Two short passages from "Rural Slum" will show what Thomas Saunders can do:

> The low hills seemed to brood
> Above them, while the muskeg reached to coil
> Its soggy arms about the land. The walls
> That sever life from death had here grown thin.

and:

> No land less loves
> Mankind—and no land holds men more. They live
> In rural squalor. . . .

Among his poems I find a few that are the best of the year.

The other three "Ryerson Chap-Books" are diversely interesting. John Murray Gibbon's *Canadian Cadences* are mainly applications of his well-known way of allowing the words and structure of a poem to be suggested by a musical work. The outcome is not evenly successful, but is always worth study. In *Last Mathematician* Hyman Edelstein continues his trenchant, erudite verse, the form sometimes buckling beneath the stress. Marjorie Freeman Campbell's *High on a Hill* has less unity in form or feeling than the others. The best of her poems are those of grief.

More Lines from Deepwood, although privately printed, must not go unmentioned. Arthur S. Bourinot turns quickly from manner to manner, theme to theme, in the dozen poems that make up the brochure. In those that reflect the Ottawa country-side (where Deepwood lies) and in those that grow out of Indian legend Mr. Bourinot achieves his usual blending of delicacy with ease.

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II. FICTION

Claude T. Bissell

Two years ago in this survey of Canadian fiction I remarked that "some of the better novelists show signs of understanding that the realistic method, no matter how carefully and painstakingly used, cannot give us all the dimensions of life." But realism is still the tradition in which our liveliest novelists feel most at home. In general terms, this tradition demands that the novelist draw his material from the contemporary scene, that he make generous, but not undiscriminating use of impressions and observations that arise out of either personal experience or careful observation, and that he shape his material so as to give a critical insight into the structure of society. Before the Second World War, the Canadian novelists who worked mainly in this tradition, more especially Grove and Callaghan, saw their typical subject in terms of a great, unequal conflict between man on the one side and the terrible ruthlessness of nature and the steady pressure of social and economic laws on the other. To this interpretation the doctrines of Naturalism leant support, and the bitter experience of the depression gave apparent proof. Since the war, however, our realistic writers have cautiously abandoned this position. In novels such as *Two Solitudes, Wind without Rain,* and *The Rich Man,* man's plight is viewed with more detachment, with a greater awareness of the ironical complexity of experience. This kind of novel does not readily lend itself to the utilization of the sense of stoical protest and the feeling of social indignation—powerful emotional aids in the novels of Grove and Callaghan; it must seek elsewhere for the exhilaration that the successful work of art must give—in the pathos and occasional nobility of human action or, more boldly, in forces that transcend the brute facts of life.

This year the novel that belongs most obviously to this post-war realistic tradition is Len Peterson's *Chipmunk.* It is the story of Claude Widgwood, worker in a Toronto bakery, who, like the chipmunk, is immersed in the deadening routine of "collecting and storing" and feels himself "surrounded on all sides by enemies real and imaginary." Although he has only the bare minimum of economic security, Claude clings tenaciously to the outward and visible signs of middle-class respectability and apes the accompanying attitudes and prejudices. In his mind trade unions, socialism, and the Red menace merge in one terrifying bogey. He refuses to join a trade union because all trade unions are dominated by dangerous agitators, and he is terrified lest he thereby become the victim of some catastrophic Communist purge. In this hostile world, Claude can find only a few sanctuaries: with his wife, Faustina, a stout, ill-tempered woman, occasionally transformed by the generous insight of the lover into a creature of exotic charms; in the company of a hardened young lad from the slums, whose predicament recalls his own battered and martyred childhood; most often, when he is with his great friend and hero, Mott Kilsoodski, the heavyweight fighter, in whose physical prowess he finds vicarious compensation for his own insignificance and his own pathetic birdlike body. But one by one these sanctuaries disappear: Nick, the slum youngster, drifts beyond his influence; Mott is fatally injured in the match that was to have lifted him to fame as a fighter; Faustina is snatched from him by a sudden, sordid twist of fate. Stripped of his supports, desolate and alone, Claude rejoins the army where, as a private during the Second World War, he had found a joyless security. In the last scene of the novel, we see him, for the first time in his life, symbolically breaking from the ranks and registering a hysterical protest against the folly of war—"the one brave moment when he squealed for light."

Mr. Peterson has given us a world painted in dull greys and sombre blacks. This is contemporary Toronto at its drabbest—a Toronto in which Maple Leaf Gardens is the temple, a second-hand car or the T.T.C. is the magic carpet, and the daily newspaper is the holy writ. The novel moves steadily along by an accumulation of small unpleasant incidents, occasionally swelling into a big dramatic scene or breaking the straight line of narration by a shift in time as Claude recalls the past or projects himself into a dream world. The sentences are flat and clipped with only brief forays beyond the range of Claude's astigmatic vision.

This is a hard and rather bitter book. It will, I suspect, become a significant document in the development of Canadian fiction, but I doubt whether it will be warmly recalled as a novel. It lacks the quality of exhilaration to which I have referred. Mr. Peterson has denied himself the luxury of an obvious emotional appeal to his readers, but he has not given us any compensating warmth and compassion in the portrayal of the pathetic lives of his people. Claude and Faustina are not suggestive symbols, not even clearly recognizable types. They are preserved only within the covers of the book; there is little possibility that they will emerge to trouble our memory.

A second realistic novel that makes use of an accumulation of small, precise detail and concentrates on the plight of the little man is Hugh Garner's *Storm Below*. It is the account of the last four days of the voyage of a Canadian corvette, part of the escort force of a convoy proceeding from Londonderry to Newfoundland during the early spring of 1943. Although this is a war novel, Mr. Garner does not look outward to the big sensational facts of the conflict. There is only one actual battle scene: the convoy is attacked, a few of the merchant ships are torpedoed, and the corvette presses, unsuccessfully as it turns out, its own private attack on a raiding submarine. Rather, Mr. Garner wants to reveal to us the tiny, but intricate world of the corvette. To this end, he gives us an abundance of technical description and, more to the point, a full gallery of human portraits, embracing almost every naval rank and a wide assortment of Canadian types. In order to give movement and depth to what might have been an extended exercise in description, he has, first of all, devised a central situation that reaches out and touches the life of the entire ship. A young ordinary seaman is accidentally killed, and the captain decides to set aside the tradition of the sea and to keep the body on board for burial at St. Johns. The decision is an unfortunate one: ancient superstitions are aroused; the *esprit de corps* of the crew is endangered; and conflicts and antipathies long latent are brought with naked ugliness into the open. These conflicts and antipathies are not merely personal; they are entangled (here we have the second means of enriching the material) with the racial and political prejudices that are part of the society from which the men have come.

Storm Below, then, has its full quota of human misery and twisted passion. In one sense, the novel properly concludes with the burial of the lad whose death had threatened to turn the final days of the voyage into an ugly nightmare. The funeral service and burial, envisaged by the captain as a last tender gesture from the living to the dead, turns into meaningless protocol carried out in a make-shift manner. And yet *Storm Below* does not have a depressing effect. The reason for this lies partially in the fact that Mr. Garner from time to time brings out the *camaraderie* and the warm sense of solidarity that come to men in a group under the stress of a simple, easily recognizable danger. More essentially it lies in Mr. Garner's considerable power to suggest the expansive quality of life. His characters are carefully selected so as to represent types and points of view; yet their uncensored speech, which is not without eloquence and cleansing wit, gives them a significance beyond the general and the representational.

Storm Below strikes me as so far the best Canadian novel based upon war experience. Its defect is primarily one of construction: there are too many points of interest that tend to pull away from the central situation. Still this is a minor blemish in a first novel that has so many shining virtues.

Mr. Roderick Haig-Brown's novel, *On the Highest Hill,* follows a simple pattern much favoured by realistic writers: the careful chronicling of the career of the hero from childhood, through youth and maturity, to some final, flaming climax. For the most part the novel has a firm regional basis in a little British Columbia town set amidst the mountains. But this is not nostalgic regionalism. From time to time, the town and rural community, both dependent for their existence on logging and the lumber industry, are torn by labour strife. Colin Ensley, the hero, breaks away twice from the community where he was born and reared: once, during the years of the depression, to share the bitter odyssey of those who were riding the rails; once again, during the Second World War, to feel fear and to see death on the battlefields of France and Holland. In these sections especially Mr. Haig-Brown writes with the detachment, the precision, the tolerant inclusiveness of the disciplined, realistic writer.

But Mr. Haig-Brown has a purpose far beyond that encompassed within a piece of faithful reporting. Colin Ensley, despite his practical skills and his physical prowess, is a tortured, romantic figure, easily bruised by the blows of circumstance, achieving peace only in withdrawal and isolation. In society he finds that a principle of active evil is at work; in the solitude of the mountains he uncovers within himself a wise passiveness. There is, however, nothing sentimental or vaguely transcendental about the use of the natural scene. Like Thoreau, Colin goes to the woods to discover himself and to reduce life to its simple, basic realities. And if he finds his greatest happiness in the woods and mountains, it is here also that he comes face to face with the ultimate horror and exaltation of death.

If only for its use of nature—not as backdrop, nor as benevolent comforter or unprincipled antagonist reaching out from another sphere, but as active agent in the human drama—*On the Highest Hill* deserves to be looked upon as a significant Canadian book. As a novel it suffers from the casual formlessness to which the fictionalized biography is susceptible; and some readers (I confess that I am one) may complain that Mr. Haig-Brown has not sufficiently disciplined the enthusiastic naturalist, and often gives us too much of a good thing.

To relieve the picture of human cruelty and waste, Mr. Peterson, slightly, and Mr. Garner, more extensively, had drawn attention to the pathos and occasional nobility of human action. Mr. Haig-Brown had turned for illumination to a world that is resistant to human taint. In *Mr. Ames against Time,* which won the Ryerson Fiction Award for 1949, Mr. Philip Child invokes spiritual forces that transcend the brute facts of existence. Before he does this, however, he reaches even more boldly than Mr. Peterson into the lower depths of an urban society. Here is a partial cast of his characters: a petty, underworld czar, who is blind even to the existence of moral problems; a prizefighter, whose weasel-like face proclaims his tainted heredity; a middle-aged alcoholic covering his cowardice with a mask of cheap cynicism; a strip-tease queen who is a hopeless drug addict. Moreover, the city slum in which these outcasts drag out their miserable lives is presented with compelling realism.

In spite of the hard, unsentimental impact of this underground world, it is plain that Mr. Child is more than a literary sociologist patiently pointing out how heredity and environment determine human fate. We get a minor clue to the author's intention in the way that he conceals the identity of his city. We may, if we choose, identify it with New York, but then a number of casual references later in the novel make clear that the author has a Canadian setting in mind. Such speculation, however, is little to the point. This could be any American or Canadian city. Mr. Child is working with a few representational backdrops, vividly and colourfully painted but without specific identity: a shabby boarding-house, a dark city river; a cheap burlesque theatre; a slum. Then as the action unfolds, it becomes apparent that Mr. Child has not denied himself the excitement scorned by the conscientious realist of suspense and surprise. Indeed, up to a point the novel follows the convention of the detective story. The underworld czar is murdered; an innocent man is accused of the murder, found guilty, and is condemned to die; the murderers (two men are morally responsible for the crime) are finally driven to confess just in time to save innocence from the gallows. But this is a detective story with a difference. Confession is not important because it paves the way to the conventional ending; it is important because it will release a poor damned soul from torment and open the way to salvation. The significance of a small incident at the opening of the novel now becomes apparent. The father of the lad falsely accused of murder, Mr. Ames, picks up a second-hand copy of *Pilgrim's Progress,* and his eyes light on these words: "As I walked through the wilderness of the world." Mr. Child is attempting a Dostoevskyan study of good and evil, a moral and religious allegory embedded in the raw material of life.

I suspect that Mr. Child would be the first to say that he has not successfully realized his high purpose in *Mr. Ames against Time.* I would suggest two shortcomings. First, the process by which the murderer is brought to make his confession depends heavily on the laboured contrivance of plot. And second, the figure of Mr. Ames is too slight to bear the strong spiritual significance that Mr. Child attaches to him. Having made these observations, I should add that there is no Canadian writer today who, attempting a novel of this kind, could so nearly close the gap between conception and execution. Mr. Child's prose style is well adapted to the needs of this kind of serious, carefully contrived novel. It is a prose in a central, conservative tradition, innocent of the stylistic experimentalism that too often hardens into a nest of mechanical devices. It is in the best sense of the phrase, scholarly prose, clear, strong, and trenchant, rigorously excluding the banal and the facetiously clever.

There are a number of novels of the year that might be grouped into an extended footnote to this section on realistic fiction. One of them, Sol Allen's *Toronto Doctor* is a belated offshoot of French Naturalism. Mr. Allen is a Zola in Canadian corduroy. His novel is a cheerfully morbid excursion into the world of the obstetrician that uses up almost four hundred pages and, at that, leaves his characters and his central situation hanging in mid-air. A far cry from Mr. Allen's operating rooms and doctors' offices is Jessie McEwen's *Taltrees,* which derives partially from the school of nostalgic regionalism and tender romance. But Miss McEwen finds time to examine the conflicts in a north-eastern Ontario lumbering community between modern capitalism and nineteenth-century paternalism and between the French and English. In *Under the Quiet Water,* Frances Shelley Wees writes a detective story with a realistic setting. The murderer operates coolly at a distance, utilizing her intimate knowledge of the moral plight of her small town victims to drive them to suicide. The best of these four novels is Don MacMillan's *Rink Rat,* a study of the career of a professional hockey player, from his apprenticeship on small community teams in Saskatchewan, through his triumphs and frustrations in the big-time professional league, to his brief return to hockey while he is a member of the Canadian army, and his apotheosis in an infantry engagement in Italy. Like another and more famous student of the spirit and ethics of sport, Mr. MacMillan strives for a tense understatement, a simplified method of characterization, and a bold, repetitive pattern in dialogue. Lacking Hemingway's toughness and power of suggestion, Mr. MacMillan gives us little more than an enthusiastic tribute to Canada's national game.

I come now to a type of novel that, although frequently given a contemporary, localized setting, is distinct in tone and purpose from the realistic group I have dealt with. These novels might be called domestic romances, using romance not in its technical, literary but in its popular, social sense. They invariably confine themselves to a family circle or to a closely related, self-contained social group, and they play upon the natural cleavages between the generations. The charming foibles and the occasional acerbities of childhood and old age are utilized for background and relief. The main emphasis is given, however, to the glamour and heartache of romantic love that can strike suddenly and mysteriously and jar the solid foundations of the accustomed way of life. A familiar pattern is the intrusion of an outsider on a cosy, domestic scene. If the intruder is a man, he tends to be a dark, Byronic figure, touched with cynicism, yet vibrant and strangely attractive; if the intruder is a woman, she brings with her all the subtle fascination of an alien world.

Of the three novels of the year that we might describe as domestic romances, Mazo de la Roche's *Mary Wakefield* shows, as we might suspect, all the casual skill of the old master. Chronologically the novel is number two in the Jalna series. This is Jalna of the nineties, in spite of the Victorian fashions, the carriages, and references to the *Yellow Book* and Oscar Wilde, not very different from Jalna of the twenties and thirties of this century. The intruder in this case is a young English governess, Mary Wakefield, beautiful daughter of a talented but recklessly bohemian London journalist, who comes to look after Philip Whiteoak's two motherless children, and remains to win the heart of Philip, to overcome the resistance of Gran and her family cohort, and to settle down as mistress of Jalna. All this is told simply and directly with a minimum of pretentious analysis and a calculated appeal to sentiment. Interspersed throughout are brief nature vignettes and perceptive accounts of the wiles of the young.

The other two domestic romances are contemporary in setting and ask that their literary conventions bear a heavier weight of meaning. Constance Beresford-Howe's novel, *The Invisible Gate,* is set in Montreal, and the action covers a year immediately after the end of the Second World War. We are introduced to the home of the Jacksons, in which Hannah, the high-spirited and courageous daughter, has succeeded to all the domestic responsibilities following the death of the parents. The intruder in this novel is an army acquaintance of Hannah's old childhood playmate, now an aspirant to her hand in marriage. The intruder is a personable young man, capable of charm and obviously destined for a successful business career; but he has worked out a cynical philosophy upon which he coolly bases his actions. He wins the love both of Hannah and of her beautiful, light-headed sister and then callously sets about to exploit his two conquests. Hannah finally recognizes what he really is—an embodiment of the power of darkness, and returns, if not with passion at least with peace of mind, to her tried and true friend and lover. I found the "deeper meaning" of the novel something of an excrescence, and would prefer to accept it simply as a domestic romance. On this level Miss Beresford-Howe has a lively talent. This seems to me to be a better novel than *Of This Day's Journey,* Miss Beresford-Howe's contribution to Canadian fiction for 1947. She is at home in her Montreal setting, and her prose has an easy fluency that can flow around and quietly encompass a scene.

The last novel in this group, Isabelle Hughes's *Time in Ambush* is, like her first novel, *The Serpent's Tooth,* set in Toronto. This time, what appears to be a solid and reasonably happy marriage is threatened by the arrival of an intruder who is the husband's close friend and with whom the wife at one time has had a brief and passionately troubled love affair. The love affair is now tentatively resumed. We are soon given to understand, however, that this is not an affair of the heart. It is all part of a deep psychological wound that the wife has suffered in her childhood and that has not yet healed. By once again enrolling the intruder as her lover, she is attempting to compensate for her sense of inferiority. The same unconscious motive lies behind her apparently benevolent interest in a shy young cousin. All these activities bear bitter fruit. Her lover contemptuously abandons her; her protégée is driven to attempt suicide; and her marriage whirls dizzily towards the rocks. Then comes the climactic psychological release. By confessing to her husband that she has been tortured by a sense of inadequacy arising out of a conviction that she was responsible for the accidental death of her younger brother, she achieves understanding and tranquillity of mind and, incidentally, saves her marriage. Although Mrs. Hughes has developed a richer situation than Miss Beresford-Howe, she does not have the latter's grace of style. The passages of description and analysis are too flat; the dialogue is too stilted to suggest the layers of significance that she is striving to uncover. And as a layman I had difficulty in accepting the psychiatrist's diagnosis of the patient.

The historical novel has three representatives this year. In *The Passionate Pilgrim,* Will Bird resumes his story of the Nova Scotia frontier in the eighteenth century. In this novel he reaches back beyond the years of the American Revolution that he had chosen for the period of his two preceding novels, *Here Stays Good Yorkshire* and *Judgment Glen*. The central historical event is now the expulsion of the Acadians, and his characters are no longer Yorkshire immigrants but recent Yankee arrivals from Massachusetts and Pennsylvania. The pattern of the novel, however, remains the same: no historical figure stands in the forefront nor, for that matter, influences the course of events; his characters are imaginary creations and they move in a world of their own dark making. Binding the sequence of events together is the device of pursuit and escape raised at the conclusion to the status of a moral reflection. Steeley Bonsel, the passionate pilgrim, learns that the wild justice he has clung to withers before the logic of circumstance. Despite the uplifting conclusion, this is a novel of violence and elemental passion. The hero, young, handsome, courageous, and cheerfully illiterate, miraculously survives an assortment of Indian massacres, frontier battles, and violent assaults on his person and his virginity. Certainly *The Passionate Pilgrim* is free of the tinsel quality of many historical novels: the atmosphere is convincingly real and the narrative flows along smoothly and strongly. But, viewed as a whole, the book is a confusing mixture of the historical novel, the adventure story, and the psychological romance.

The other two historical novels stick closely to the conventions of the *genre*. Each selects characters and events that bear the imprints of history and legend. Harry Symons in *Three Ships West* tells about the voyage of Columbus to the New World, with an extended review of the preliminaries and a brief glance at the aftermath. Mr. Symons has difficulty in vitalizing his historical material; occasionally he abandons the attempt altogether and resorts to text-book summary. And Columbus is too thickly swathed in his own grandeur to be accepted as a living person.

Bertram Brooker's *The Robber* is concerned with the background of personal conflicts and historical movements that led to the betrayal and crucifixion of Jesus. The robber is Barabbas, one of the three revolutionary Judean leaders whose careers and fates were intertwined. Barabbas is the radical who believes in the necessity for revolution in order to usher in the new world of economic equality; John the Baptist, who appears more as the stock figure of history than as an individual, is the impassioned prophet summoning the nation to repentance and calling down divine vengeance on the hard of heart; Jesus, who is felt as a spiritual force and not seen in flesh and blood, is the moral revolutionary whose gospel of love is the most powerful dissolvent of the old way of life. But it is Barabbas who is the hero of the novel. Mr. Brooker sees him as a commanding Byronic figure, fierce and unreasonable in his hatred, but capable of tenderness and romantic devotion and responding finally to the miracle of divine love. This is the most solid and substantial of the three historical novels. The major characters—Joseph of Aramathea, Judas, Herod, Salome, Antipas also play leading roles—are set before us in bold outline, and the political and social background is given generous emphasis. The flashier accoutrements of the historical novel are also there: a romantic love affair nourished on separation, the spectacle of human bestiality, and acts of great physical daring. If Mr. Brooker had added more pungent spices to the mixture and if the Canadian literary world had been able to provide a more resonant fanfare of publicity, *The Robber* might well have joined the ranks of the best-sellers.

I shall conclude this survey with a consideration of four novels that do not belong to any of the main traditions in Canadian fiction. Two of these may be conveniently grouped together. Kathleen Coburn's *The Grandmothers* and Ethel Wilson's *The Innocent Traveller* are both, in a sense, character sketches given a lengthy extension in time, and both celebrate the unpretentious heroism of women who refused to be subdued by the tribulations of the passing years.

Miss Coburn tells us about two women, the one born in a small pioneer settlement in Upper Canada, dividing the years after marriage between rural Ontario and the growing metropolis of Toronto; the other, a native of Bohemia, like her Canadian counterpart, freely giving her energy and her talents to her family and the community in which she lived, but caught up at times in the political and social storms that raged through central Europe. It is Miss Coburn's intention to show how these two women who were exact contemporaries wove out of dissimilar experience a common pattern, "and left the vivid air signed with their honour." The novel is presented as the composite recollections of Ruth, the grand-daughter of the Canadian "Gran," and Jenda, the grandson of the Czechoslovakian "Babicka," whose marriage, celebrated in a single sentence at the conclusion of the novel, symbolically reinforces the spiritual union of their ancestors. Another device for drawing the two lives together is the introduction of brief interludes of rhythmical prose that tell about the unchanging cycles of life and nature in which the very idea of separateness is dissolved. The design of this novel is thus refreshingly new. For this bold departure from the expected, we should be grateful. Yet the expectations aroused by the ingenuity of the design are not borne out in the execution. The word does not become flesh. This is especially apparent in the Bohemian sections in which Miss Coburn is perhaps too self-consciously intent on catching all the elusive glints of local colour. And I found that the two heroines were constantly breaking up into scraps of reminiscence, anecdotes, and random impressions.

The Innocent Traveller is a novel much more restricted in scope and much more obvious in design than *The Grandmothers.* Mrs. Wilson's first novel was a slight work burdened by a melodramatic plot, but it revealed a writer who was a genuine stylist, who could at her best find just the right words to create a mood or to vitalize a situation. Now in her second novel, Mrs. Wilson has abandoned—wisely, one suspects—any attempt at surprise, coincidence, and the other paraphernalia of plot, and has allowed her book to sprawl in leisurely fashion over a period of one hundred years, from mid-Victorian times almost to the present day. She moves calmly forward on the river of time with only the occasional polite acknowledgment of the complexities of love, marriage, and death. Her chapters frequently stand by themselves as gentle and amusing sketches or as slight dramas given substance by insight and nostalgic retrospective glow.

What binds the chapters together is the almost continuous presence of one character, Topaz Edgeworth, the youngest daughter of a prosperous, middle-class Staffordshire family, who in her intrepid innocence and her irrepressible gaiety, overcomes the minor social conventions and time itself, and gradually becomes the spiritual head of the numerous and widely scattered family. From the time when as a small child she succeeds in attracting the judicial attention of the family's distinguished dinner guest, the rising young poet, Mr. Matthew Arnold, Topaz dominates almost every family scene. But it is not merely by her dominance as a character that Topaz provides the unifying principle of the novel. It is her point of view, her attitude toward experience with which the author identifies herself. Now Mrs. Wilson is aware of the limitations of that point of view. She tells us in one of the rare passages of direct comment that Topaz was "concerned only with the veriest surface of material and psychic being" and that she was "unaware of the dreadful deeps below her, in which other beings more heavily weighted are plunged, and swim or sink, caught in the mud or entangled by the débris of circumstance and human relations." It is, I think, a sign not of weakness but of strength that Mrs. Wilson has maintained delicately and consistently a single point of view, even though that point of view deliberately rules out whole areas of experience that other novelists have considered of first importance. Within the limitations she has set for herself Mrs. Wilson can find a place for humour, for gentle satire, and for a good deal of sense and sensibility.

Mr. Earle Birney's novel, *Turvey,* described by the author as a "military picaresque," has a long and respectable ancestry in English and European literature, but has, as far as I am aware, no blood relations in Canadian fiction. He uses the military career of his cheerfully moronic hero, a private in the Canadian army during the Second World War, as the framework for a succession of fabliaux. Turvey is a cross between "the little man" and the imperturbable clown who is always being caught up by machinery that he never understands. Yet *Turvey,* for all its high spirits and its extensive departures from the soberly factual, has a solid foundation of first-hand experience and close-range observation. Mr. Birney is concerned with the vast, tangled lower depths of the army where the individual becomes a dossier and the civil servant armed with undreamed-of authority enters into his dark heritage. This is the world of the district depot, the military hospital, the reinforcement unit, the detention barracks, the orderly room and, above all, the personnel selection office. The author knows this world well, and if he can make its solemn stupidities the stuff for burlesque and caricature, he is not unaware of the fact that its victims saw matters in a different light.

Turvey may well become one of the most popular Canadian books of recent years. For several good reasons it deserves this distinction. The best Canadian novels, with a few exceptions, have been remarkably solemn productions, and it is a welcome relief to read a novel that deliberately seeks and often achieves a robust humour. Some of the incidents are too patently contrived and depend too boldly on barrack-room farce. But several reach a level where genial burlesque and serious satire achieve a full and satisfying harmony. I liked especially Turvey's initial brush with the administrative hierarchy, the court martial at Niagara, and Turvey's ordeal at the centre for officer candidates. Then Mr. Birney handles words with the supple imagination of the poet. We read, for instance, of the C.O. for whom the war was "a silent inky battle against forms," of the hard-drinking Paymaster who "paid off the same regiment twice in one week in a burst of alcoholic benevolence," and, in more serious vein, of the "dead village, killed in some artillery or aerial duel." If anything, Mr. Birney has a tendency to overwrite, to pile up clever phrases so that they eventually become cloying.

In a novel of this kind one does not ask for rounded characterizations. It is enough if the author works out a satisfactory formula for his puppets. And the formula in this novel is often not satisfactory, especially when Mr. Birney is introducing characters that are outside of his comic world; they remind one uncomfortably of the "good fellows" of the schoolboy serial. This weakness is most apparent in the final sections of the novel where Turvey catches an exhilarating glimpse of front-line life, is sent to hospital, and becomes, in his stumblingly inept way, a successful lover.

Robert Christie's *Inherit the Night* is as doggedly serious as *Turvey* is persistently comic. Mr. Christie takes us first of all to a remote South American village beside the Andes and then leads us by a precipitous route to the mountain settlement of San Cobar. San Cobar is by way of being a minor Utopia, with a physical setting that may strongly recall Erewhon and a way of life that may arouse vague associations with Shangri-La. To San Cobar, for generations isolated from the outside world, comes a stranger, calling himself Kurt Werden and carrying with him a mysterious and sinister past. The novel becomes in large part an account of the spiritual blight that Werden's sojourn in San Cobar casts over the lives of the innocent villagers.

The village of San Cobar derives, as I have suggested, from Utopian romance. Werden, the interloper, is fashioned from less fragile material; he answers in every detail to the type that has been delineated in countless articles and books on Nazi Germany. You may look upon him, if you so wish, as Hitler himself, miraculously escaped and seeking sanctuary from the judgment of the world; or while still retaining these helpfully concrete associations, you may regard him simply as the embodiment of evil.

This is a novel in which everything subserves an allegorical purpose, in which the physical and the human must be constantly translated into the spiritual. We have a right to ask of such a novel that the physical and the human be in themselves strongly and vividly presented and that they convey the allegorical meaning subtly and yet inevitably. This is a difficult art, and one that Mr. Christie, in the company of many thoughtful writers, has not mastered. The trouble is, I think, that Mr. Christie's villagers, in spite of an un-Utopian absorption in the physical, are not fully enough imagined. They are not fit actors in the conflict between absolutes. Werden's conversion of the village to his own gospel of hate and fear and the final resurgence of good are both too swiftly and too casually achieved. I do not want to suggest, however, that this is an ineffective novel. For there are passages that have the encompassing suggestiveness reminiscent of Kafka and some of the early novels of Rex Warner. I refer particularly to the symbolic use that Mr. Christie makes of the cold and desolate pass that connects the pleasant valley of San Cobar with the outside world. When the villagers, infected by Werden's fear of the world outside, desert their fair and fruitful fields to mount guard on the pass, their action becomes richly suggestive of a human situation in which we are all tragically involved.

This year is one of the best we have had in Canadian fiction for some time. Among the more heartening general trends were the deepening and strengthening of the realistic tradition, a readiness among our writers to come to grips with basic human problems, some evidence of an interest in new techniques, and a much higher level in the quality of prose. Whereas in previous years, this survey was pivoted on a few novels that stood out in sharp contrast with the solid mass of mediocrity, this year it has been necessary to distribute critical analysis far more evenly. Perhaps the time has arrived when the critic of Canadian fiction need not confine himself to a few optimistic protestations interjected during the delivery of a gloomy business report.

CHECK-LIST OF TITLES

Allen (**Sol**), Toronto doctor (Toronto, Rock Publishing Co., 72 Carlton St., viii, 390 pp., $3.75). **Beresford-Howe** (**Constance**), The invisible gate (New York, Dodd Mead; Toronto, McClelland & Stewart, x, 241 pp., $3.50). **Bird** (**W. R.**), The passionate pilgrim (Toronto, Ryerson, viii, 324 pp., $3.25). **Birney** (**Earle**), Turvey: a military picaresque (Toronto, McClelland & Stewart, x, 288 pp., $3.25). **Brockie** (**William**), Tales of the Mounted (Toronto, Ryerson, viii, 182 pp., $2.75). **Brooker** (**Bertram**), The robber: a tale of the time of the Herods (Toronto, Collins, viii, 307 pp., $3.00). **Child** (**Philip**), Mr. Ames against time (Toronto, Ryerson, vi, 244 pp., $3.00). **Christie** (**Robert**), Inherit the night (New York, Farrar Straus; Toronto, Clarke Irwin, vi, 409 pp., $4.00). **Clay** (**G. A.**), Gina (New York, Pellegrini; Toronto, McLeod, 1948, 378 pp., $3.00). **Coburn** (**Kathleen**), The grandmothers; with drawings by **John A. Hall** (Toronto, Oxford, x, 233 pp., $3.00). **Garner** (**Hugh**), Storm below (Toronto, Collins, xii, 227 pp., $3.00). **Haig-Brown** (**R. L.**), On the highest hill (Toronto, Collins, 319 pp., $3.25). **Hewitt** (**Foster**), "He shoots, he scores!" (Toronto, Allen, viii, 145 pp., $1.25). **Hughes** (**Isabelle**), Time in ambush (Toronto, Collins, vi, 257 pp., $3.00). **McDowell** (**F. D.**), The Champlain road; Huronian ed. (Toronto, Macmillan, xvi, 338 pp., $3.50). **McEwen** (**Jessie**), Taltrees (Toronto, Ryerson, vi, 221 pp., $3.25). **MacMillan** (**Don**), Rink rat (Toronto, Dent, vi, 248 pp., $3.00). **Marshall** (**Rosamond**), Celeste (Toronto, McLeod, 242 pp., $3.25). **Mayse** (**Arthur**), Perilous passage (Toronto, Collins, 247 pp., $3.25). **Meade** (**E. F.**), Remember me (Montreal, Reprint Society of Canada, 318 pp., $1.50 to members). **Perrot** (**Irene**), Cathedral windows (Phoenix, Ariz., Sunland Publishers; Montreal, Palm Publishers, ii, 147 pp., $3.00). **Peterson** (**Len**), Chipmunk (Toronto, McClelland & Stewart, iv, 299 pp., $3.25). **Raddall** (**T. H.**), Roger Sudden (Montreal, Reprint Society of Canada, viii, 385 pp., $1.50 to members). **Robb** (**W. H.**), Thunderbird (Kingston, Abbey Dawn Press, 242 pp., $3.50). **Roberts** (**C. G. D.**), Forest folk; chosen and ed. by **Ethel Hume Bennett**; ill. by **John A. Hall** (Toronto, Ryerson, x, 237 pp., $2.75). **Roche** (**Mazo de la**), The building of Jalna (Montreal, Reprint Society of Canada, vi, 373 pp., $1.50 to members); Mary Wakefield (Toronto, Macmillan, vi, 298 pp., $3.25). **Slater** (**Patrick**), The yellow briar: a story of the Irish on the Canadian countryside (Montreal, Reprint Society of Canada, x, 293 pp., $1.50 to members). **Symons** (**Harry**), Three ships west (Toronto, Ryerson, viii, 315 pp., $3.25). **Walker** (**David**), The storm and the silence (Boston, Houghton Mifflin; Toronto, Allen, viii, 248 pp., $3.25). **Wees** (**F. S.**), Under the quiet water (Philadelphia, Macrae-Smith-Co.; Toronto, Collins, 256 pp., $3.00). **White** (**S. A.**), Tempête sur le Nord-Ouest; French trans. of Northwest crossing (Bruxelles, Edns de la Paix). **Wilson** (**Ethel**), The innocent traveller (Toronto, Macmillan, x, 277 pp., $2.75).

III. DRAMA

Vincent Tovell

Gratien Gélinas (Fridolin) gave an important address, "Un Théâtre National et Populaire," at the University of Montreal when he received an honorary degree for his remarkable work in the Canadian theatre. Fortunately, its text has been published.[1] It is in no way to detract from M. Gélinas' remarks to say that many of his views on the theatre in Canada, here expressed, derive from the aesthetics of Copeau, Claudel, Jouvet, Ghéon and other great leaders of the modern French theatre. Their ideas are inspiring a fruitful unity of purpose as well as (to a lesser degree) a unity of style in the French-Canadian theatre today which does not as yet exist elsewhere in Canada.

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[1] *L'Action universitaire,* Avril, 1949.

M. Gélinas stresses a point of view well summed up in Jacques Copeau's remark: "Il n'y aura de vrai théâtre que le jour où l'homme de la salle pourra murmurer les paroles de l'homme de la scène en même temps que lui et du même cœur que lui." Without pursuing the idea to its ultimately ritualistic and mystical implications, as Eric Bentley did recently in an interesting analysis of this Catholic and social theatre philosophy,[2] we can see, as M. Gélinas does, its obvious meaning for Canadians today. For our theatre to thrive it must be appropriate to our culture, generated from it and popularly accepted within it, and to be so it must express the culture with immediacy, recognizably and imaginatively. Unless there is an affective unity of the writer, the performer, and the audience, a union on several levels of course, there can be no vital theatre. So far in Canada we have, on the whole, imported our theatre, then imitated the importations. Fridolin is remarkable if only because he has created his marvellous tradition out of the materials in Quebec around him. He at least has achieved the desired unity; and he has a public and a big reputation for his reward. However, his modesty makes this address a challenge to himself, and all like him who want our theatre to grow, rather than an explanation of his personal fame and good fortune.

The little group of stage plays in English sent in this year[3] hardly exemplifies the exciting spirit M. Gélinas talks about and they do not, taken together, suggest a general rise in the standard of Canadian playwriting, however good some of them are.

But the volume of one-act plays by Robertson Davies that has appeared is very welcome. *Eros at Breakfast,* the title play, is most entertaining, as the audience knows that saw it during the Dominion Drama Festival in 1948 (when it won the Barry Jackson Award for the best Canadian play). Last summer it made a good impression in Edinburgh, where it had been sent to represent our theatre. It is not representative of it at all, of course, and it is a much better play for that. This is a hilarious and fanciful diversion, picturing the upheaval within the solar plexus of a young man newly in love, colourful, gay, and quite indescribable. It is very refreshing. *Overlaid* is perhaps even better. Beneath its surface comedy there is a deeper humour that is sad. We see a frisky old man, bound to a rural life, kept by a cold-spirited daughter from the beauty he finds in the Metropolitan Opera broadcasts. The play strikes deftly into the Canadian Home. Philistinism is the theme of *Hope Deferred,* too, a story of Frontenac in old Quebec, where Mr. Davies again attacks the hostility to the arts he finds in Canada. Bourgeois respectability is made fun of in *At the Gates of the Righteous* and the satirical note is in *The Voice of The People* too. It is the most conventional comedy in the book but it is neat, and like the rest of them, theatre-wise and very entertaining. The volume is quite attractively printed and it has a charming introduction by Tyrone Guthrie.

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[2] *Theatre Arts,* March, 1950.

[3] We might remark here that it is not possible to comment on all the new plays presented in Canada in 1949. Some of the scripts were, regrettably, not available to us. Reasons of space prevent consideration of the encouraging number of one-act plays reported to us in letters, performed by such groups as the Little Theatre Guild of Charlottetown, the Montreal Repertory Theatre Studio, the Ottawa Drama League Workshop, the Queen's Drama Guild, Workshop 14 of Calgary, and the Vancouver Little Theatre.

Joseph Schull's "The Bridge," a three-act drama from which a "Stage 47" script derived, is the most ambitious play to be considered in this survey. It is reportedly to be done on Broadway. No doubt the script will be revised in rehearsals beforehand, and these comments refer only to an early draft. The plot has a background of the war's aftermath. A British officer has been sent into a French village to repair a war-damaged bridge. He is billeted in the home of Lili, the local *collaboratrice,* and falls in love with her. But Lili has been cruelly victimized by neighbours who reject her with her half-German child and she declares herself dead to all affection now. However, her German lover happens to be one of the prisoners repairing the bridge and, one night, with the unwitting help of his son, he manages to seduce the wretched girl again. This development precipitates a crisis which brings the town out in force and it provokes speeches to the effect that it is time for Lili, and all of us, to forget the hateful past, time to build a sturdy bridge into the future. Mr. Schull is a very experienced radio-writer and the solid construction of this play indicates that he also knows the theatre well. But he is tempted to romanticize his characters and to exaggerate or overstate his effects. The play begins with a promising situation, but when the "gimmick" of the wicked German is introduced it slips into a conventional pattern from which it is never rescued. The large theme of war and peace, or, more precisely, of revenge, is muddled with the vagaries of a sensational romance. This may win the story a popular audience but it obscures its obviously sincere and serious purpose. On the whole, the subject seems to be exploited rather than explored and neither the characters nor their situation is presented in sufficient depth to give us much insight into them. If they had been there would have been no need for the passages of rhetoric which give the play its false climax. When the plot is well set the meaning should take care of itself.

"The Inheritance," by Harry J. Boyle, was produced on "Stage 49," as "The Macdonalds of Oak Valley," and later, in this three-act version, by the New Play Society of Toronto. It tells an ancient story. "Gramp" Macdonald is a proud homesteader of southern Ontario. He will not yield authority on his farm to his sons and he will not let them have land of their own to work as they wish. He will hold the property intact as their inheritance and no logic can persuade him to make the technological changes the times require. Mr. Boyle presents some of the arguments that came to nothing and then the fortuitous calamities that finally broke his spirit. It is regrettable that this play was not rewritten before its première. It is, as it stands, very promising and ready for close revisions. Too much emphasis still falls on the picturesque aspects of the subject, on the kitchen ritual for example, and not enough on the main conflict. The characters are more benign than they should be to express the theme, and because they are sketchily (though perceptively) written, the plot seems to lurch to its climax. But the material that is in the script now gives a very good indication of the excellent *genre*-piece Mr. Boyle might make of it. It would certainly be a pity if he did not rework it.

"Where There's a Will," by Martin O'Meara, presented by the London Life Players Club, is a farce in three acts about a spinster who inherits a burlesque house. Such an anecdote needs extraordinarily skilful handling to make a full evening's entertainment and Mr. O'Meara has not done much with it. His plot lacks comic invention and the dialogue, though smooth and perfectly efficient, does not sparkle. His one-act comedy *Sitting Bill,* about the misfortunes of a baby sitter, is successful in its way; it has a busy plot that should get its laughs in performance. There are two other plays from London, both by a young writer, William Digby. The grim one-act "Over the Boiler Room," the last quarrel between an apartment superintendent and his wife, is vivid but hackneyed and not as interesting as "The Vise" (in three acts), a tragedy of a lonely adolescent whose family cannot understand his emotional problems. Mr. Digby approaches this difficult subject very timidly and it is hard to know what insight he has into it or what he might say if he were to go further with it. Some of his dialogue is well done and the scenes have real tension, but the characters are not yet as much developed as they might be. In Shirley Fowke's three-act "Devil Take Me" a Quebec priest struggles with the devil for a mischief-maker's soul. The old theme is not much varied, but the last act is suspenseful and parts of the play are so good that one wonders what Miss Fowke might do with fresher material. From the West there is Elsie Park Gowan's little one-act comedy "Breeches from Bond Street," not her best but stage-wise and lively. It was designed for easy production by amateurs and it should play well. In the "Canadian Playwright Series" has appeared a comedy-drama by Percy N. Jacobson called *The Usual Three*. The title is appropriate.

This survey cannot report on all the original dramatic material written for radio in Canada within the year; its bulk would be overwhelming.[4] However, it should not omit this important work altogether. Since our theatre pays writers nothing it gets little from them; radio, on the other hand, is a flourishing industry and at the moment most of our ablest playwrights are active in it. So we can do no less (if, regrettably, no more) than mention a few specially interesting scripts and apologize to those writers whose work has not been included.

Of the eight original plays presented on the C.B.C.'s "Stage" series the two most interesting were by Lister Sinclair.

At the opening of "Hilda Morgan" we meet the heroine, a young Toronto school-teacher, and her fiancé who are very much in love and eager to marry. We soon learn that Hilda is pregnant. Before her marriage can be arranged, however, the fiancé is killed and Hilda is left with a "problem." The moment her family hears about it a brisk and relentless argument starts up. Her mother is a God-fearing woman and these prospects terrify her. Her sister, whose husband works in a bank, is calmer about it but she is practical and anxious that his position not be threatened. They both want Hilda to do just about everything but have the child and shame them all. At last Hilda is outraged by their lack of consideration for her harrowed feelings and their selfish preoccupation with their own. She lectures them angrily and eventually strikes out for the home of her fiancé's mother where, she has been told beforehand, she may have her baby with honour.

It may not be quite fair to "Hilda Morgan" to call it a discussion play. The term suggests tedium and this is a lively, often tense and absorbing script. But for all its surface manner of realism, the average-type characters, their quasi-natural speech, or the apparently natural action, the main situation seems to have been introduced very arbitrarily to provoke a debate and the drama arises out of conflicting ideas rather than an expression of the emotional states that give rise to them. Mr. Sinclair, it is clear, is fascinated by ideas, for their intrinsic worth, and also by the patterns of words in arguments, with their musical qualities of melody, rhythm, and harmony. He asks us to take his characters at their word, as it were. He does not seem to be much interested in probing beneath their surfaces, their verbal surfaces, to explore and express their ambivalent feelings, the shifting lights and shades of their complex personalities. These people are not merely his puppets, it is true, but he often makes them say what they should say to advance a lively argument rather than what we suspect they actually would say in response to their feelings, and he holds our attention with the excitement of their conversation (which is, of course, the variety of his own verbal talent), rather than with the presentation of their character in depth, or their situations.

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[4] For the same reason it is not possible to provide a check-list of radio drama.

But though "Hilda Morgan" may be a discussion play it is not really a thesis play, as some angry listeners supposed. Hilda, like all the new-women of literature before her (*her* parentage will never be in doubt!) is bright, and she possibly wins the debate, on points. But both sides talk sense and nonsense without much concern for ethical consistency and the play is hardly an essay in morality. If it is to be attacked, it might be said that Hilda is really rather less of a martyr and heroine than she feels she is, and that we might have been more impressed by her courage (and so more moved by her need) had she left her family without knowing that she had a much friendlier home to go to, as Nora did before her. To have had Hilda cast out in the cold would have been old-fashioned dramatically (though not unrealistic), yet to have her walk out of one home into a nicer one is not to alter the old story much; it only gives it a new air of respectability. Mr. Sinclair apparently wanted to emphasize the cruelty of putting Hilda out equally with the kindness of taking her in. But in doing so he has made her a more passive heroine than he seemed to intend, or at least than she admits to being.

"St. Augustine of Canterbury" is in a very different style. The missionary's travail among the Anglo-Saxons is narrated by Bede in the simple chronicle manner and dramatized to give the atmosphere and the story vividly in greater detail. In the first part Mr. Sinclair contrasts the heathen culture (with its rudimentary Christianity), and the new outlook brought from overseas by the little band of monks, and some of this is very amusing. But as the history unfolds the parable becomes clearer. It is brought to a poignant climax when St. Augustine realizes he has succeeded in converting the heathen to the outward forms of his faith but that he has not managed, either by precept or example, to inspire them with its spirit.

This Augustine is a noble and moving figure, simple without being austere and humble without being sanctimonious. His sobriety, by contrast with the exuberant people around him, makes us feel his greater energy and an impressive intensity of spirit underlies his apt and measured speech. Only in his "Socrates"[2] has Mr. Sinclair created and sustained a heroic characterization so well before, and if this play is not so ambitious in its scope as that one was, it is not less moving for its greater simplicity.

The other new plays produced on the "Stage" series are disappointing. A script by a novelist, new to radio, W. O. Mitchell, might be mentioned. "The Devil's Instrument" is a study of the conscience-struggle within a young Hutterite who is tempted to break with his ancestral traditions. We watch him waver and recoil from temptation with interest and it is a real climax when his decision is finally made. The dialogue in this script seems unusually good; it has flavour and power. But it is unfortunate that the author has the script narrated by a story-book devil; the device is trite and artificial. It obscures the conflict within the boy and between him and his community, and it debases the subject to "explain" his defection in such naïve and whimsical terms.

A varied group of half-hour plays was done on the C.B.C.'s Montreal series "Listening Room Only" under Raymond Whitehouse's direction. Perhaps the most polished and certainly one of the most exciting was "The Inner Landscape" by Charles Wassermann, an account of how his father, Jacob Wassermann, faced a hostile mob of Nazi students sent against him, and silenced them with the great force of his personality. We await the crucial meeting with frightful suspense, and if the great speech which worked the miracle had to be reduced to a few lines it is not, of course, the writer's fault—but it is the listener's loss. Gordon Burwash's story "The Red Deer," about a brute who could love nothing but the animal that killed him, is excellently told. It is difficult to know why the author's work is not heard more often or better known. Two poetic plays in this series are interesting, though not quite successful. "Call My People Home," by Dorothy Livesay, is on the subject of the Japanese-Canadians who were evacuated from their West Coast homes. Miss Livesay's script is a reflective narrative for contrasting voices and not really dramatic at all. Perhaps her idea might have been developed into an effective radio cantata had the speeches been more varied in rhythm and tempo and the lines more subtly integrated with music. Some of them are lovely and wasted in their present setting. It must be said, though, that the poetic style, while it is sometimes very pleasing, is on the whole applied to the surface of the subject rather than extracted from it. And this is also true of Raymond Whitehouse's "Vacuum." The idea in it is originally worked out: the fantasies of three men are inter-woven so that we see the mesh of events, thoughts, and feelings that bind them one to another, and in this ingenious way their common problems are illuminated. If each man's narration had been more particularly coloured and the language more strictly disciplined the effect might have been very moving. But the fantasies tend to dissipate into words and so the vivid and concrete effect of true poetry is lost.

The "Vancouver Theatre" also offered a greater variety of half-hour plays than we can mention here. Four should be noted, however. There was the fanciful comedy "MacTavish in the Underworld," for example, by A. B. McFadyen, which reworks the stereotypes about the

Scot but in a very good-humoured way; the plot and dialogue are sprightly and entertaining. "The Trench," by Mario Prizek and Norman Klenman, is an opposite mood. This is a parable of our grand delusions, a picture of four men fighting on and on against an enemy they have never seen, victims in the end only of their own destructive imaginations. The idea is striking but the play holds the attention by more than novelty. If it seems to echo some science-fiction its serious point is clear enough and can be strongly felt. Two plays, "My Brother's Keeper" by Melwyn Breen and "Saint Mike" by Brian Mills, are well written and entertaining. In the first, a group of students are expecting the suicide of a friend; the climax comes inevitably after a long and harrowing vigil in their fraternity house. The effect of slow suspense is well managed and the university atmosphere is convincingly created. The second story is of love and hate in Italy during the war and it is told vividly.

Two unusually good scripts were used on the C.B.C.'s "Summer Theatre," directed by Esse W. Ljungh. One was John Bethune's wild and horrifying "Phantasmagoria," in which the dreams-within-dreams of the narrator (Lorne Greene) were most ingeniously muddled and the listener's sense of time and space entertainingly confused. The play is delightfully original and cleverly benefits from the possibilities of radio. "Everybody Likes Me," by Len Peterson is a violent story about a simple boy whose terror finally makes him destructive. It is not Mr. Peterson's most original play but it is powerful and moving and an unusually mature tragedy for radio. The variety of pressures on the boy are exceptionally well brought out to gain sympathy for him, and there is no more skillfully developed script than this in any of these series.

Mr. Peterson also supplied the dramatic material for the C.B.C. series "In Search of Ourselves," which has been on the air for three seasons. This is one of the C.B.C.'s most provocative and valuable experiments in educational broadcasting. In co-operation with the National Committee for Mental Hygiene and Dr. J. D. M. Griffin, its Medical Director, it presents each week the situation of an individual handicapped by some emotional disability, in dramatic form. For a few minutes, at the end of the illustrative section of the programme, Dr. Griffin discusses a few apparent causes and some of the problems of treating the condition. The stories are, as far as possible, presented in some complexity and the programme offers no easy solutions to the questions they raise. It is designed only to stimulate interest in the subject and direct that interest constructively. To further this end, many listening groups have been organized across the country and now four scripts from the series have been published in pamphlet form by McClelland and Stewart of Toronto. Each booklet includes the play and Dr. Griffin's commentary as well as a short reading list. They are exceptionally good, in their way, and very well worth reading. It is to be hoped that others like them will soon appear.

Special mention should be made of another Len Peterson script, "The Cardboard Box." It was written on commission for the United Nations as a contribution to the UN-NBC series of half-hour reports, and produced in Toronto by Andrew Allan. The subject is genocide. Its terrible importance can hardly be comprehended in one short programme, but the purpose of this play was to inform the American and Canadian public of the meaning and history of the Genocide Convention which the General Assembly adopted, and to stress the urgency for national and international legislation to make genocide illegal. With great skill and notable discretion Mr. Peterson conveyed the ugliness of the crime without allowing the lurid facts to detract from his constructive intention. This is an excellent script.

SELECTED TITLES

Published plays. Davies (Robertson), Eros at breakfast and other plays; with an introduction by Tyrone Guthrie (Toronto, Clarke Irwin, xiv, 129 pp., $2.50); Fortune my foe (Toronto, Clarke Irwin, 100 pp., $1.50); Overlaid: a comedy (Canadian playwright series; Toronto, Samuel French, 1948, 24 pp., 50c.). Jacobson (P. N.), Ridiculous and sublime: a comedy in one act (Boston, Baker, 1948, 38 pp.); The usual three (Canadian playwright series; Toronto, Samuel French, 1948, 20 pp., 50c.). O'Meara (Martin), Sitting Bill: a comedy in one act (Canadian playwright series; Toronto, Samuel French, 30 pp., 50c.). Peterson (Len) and Griffin (J. D. M.), In search of ourselves: a pamphlet series on mental hygiene adapted from the CBC program of similar title; nos. 1-4 (Toronto, McClelland & Stewart, 20, 18, 23, 18 pp., $1.25 series). Stewart (Luke), Daft Danny: a comedy in one act (Canadian playwright series; Toronto, Samuel French, 1947, 26 pp., 50c.).

New periodical. Western theatre (Summer, 1949); quarterly; replacing *Stage Door;* "news of theatre events in western Canada and articles on general or practical topics"; editorial office, Department of Fine Arts, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alta.; subscriptions, Department of Extension, University of Alberta; $1.00 a year, 25c. a copy.

Plays produced. Boyle (H. J.), The inheritance (Toronto, New Play Society). Callaghan (Morley), To tell the truth (Toronto, New Play Society). Digby (William), Over the boiler room (London, London Little Theatre, Western Ontario Drama Festival; Toronto, Dominion Drama Festival); The vise (Kingston, Queen's Drama Guild). Fowke (Shirley), Devil take me (Kingston, Queen's Summer Theatre). Gowan (E. P.), Breeches from Bond Street (Edmonton, University Provincial Players, University of Alberta, Drama Division, Studio Theatre; Alberta Drama Festival). Moore (Mavor), Who's who? (Toronto, New Play Society). O'Meara (Martin), Where there's a will (London, London Life Players Club). Orchard (Robert), The white man and the mountain (Edmonton, University of Alberta, Drama Division). Schull (Joseph), The bridge (Kingston, Queen's Summer Theatre, 1948). Whittaker (Herbert) and McPhee (Janet), Jupiter in retreat (Kingston, Queen's Summer Theatre, 1948).

IV. SOCIAL STUDIES

A. Brady

This survey may begin by reference to a volume which in attempting to explain Canada in its totality is a suitable introduction to Canadian biographies, histories, and other works. André Siegfried's *Canada, an International Power,* is a much revised second edition of a book that originally appeared in 1937. Siegfried has a rightful reputation as the most brilliant French interpreter of the English-speaking world. In 1907 appeared his *Race Question in Canada,* which remains one of the most luminous studies of its theme yet published. The present volume reflects the author's admirable qualities: his clear and vivid style, his insight into the subtleties of national attitudes, and his skill in placing the life of the nation in a world setting. Yet, while usually penetrating in his treatment of major ideas, Siegfried's command of details is often deficient and provides an inadequate support for many of his generalizations. It is misleading for him to suggest that the east-west axis in Canada is purely historical and artificial, for such a view does not really recognize the significance of the geographic configuration of the country and especially the basic role of the St. Lawrence in determining the economic and political history of Canada. There is nothing artificial about a vast waterway, even one improved by canals. Less important, but equally misleading, is his remark that the climate "falls into vertical zones prolonging those of the United States." We share much weather with our American neighbours, but not the amount suggested here. It is strange to find the comment that in western Canada the horse "is only raised for meat." It is no less strange to read that "the Canadian workman has adopted the standards of the New World, for he arrives at the factory in his car, wears gauntlets at work, is well equipped and well housed." This remarkable generalization is derived from the logical categories into which a very logical mind tries to fit all facts. Unfortunately the facts do not always fit. Nevertheless Siegfried's book is thought-provoking and rewarding.

An interesting fact of the year is the appearance of two volumes which in different ways throw light upon distinguished figures in the political life of Canada during the last half-century. *Mackenzie King of Canada* by H. Reginald Hardy is the first full-length account of Mr. King's personality and political career. It may be frankly admitted at the outset that the biography is not one that will satisfy the critical. Written in the relaxed, rambling fashion of a newspaper commentary, it displays much zealous labour on Mr. Hardy's part, especially in obtaining information concerning his subject's early life in Kitchener and Toronto and in collecting a store of revealing anecdotes. It presents an entertaining although rather sentimental account of Mackenzie King as a person. Amid much trivia a reader will cherish some of the stories, especially the reply to Mr. Leonard Brockington's complaint when acting as a draftsman of the Prime Minister's speeches that all his purple passages were carefully removed by his boss. "Ah, the one thing you forget, Brockington, is that the public remembers purple passages." But any serious biography of a man who played so conspicuous a role in the politics of Canada for thirty years must contain something more than choice anecdotes. It must attempt to relate the party leader to the complex forces of his day, to reveal without the obscurations of sentiment his powers and limitations of leadership, and to assess his final achievements. To these requirements, interpreted rigorously, *Mackenzie King of Canada* does not measure up. Doubtless it is too soon to expect an adequate life of Mr. King. Any work written today must inevitably be provisional since most of the invaluable private papers are not at present accessible. Nor is it easy yet for an author to view the former Liberal leader in proper perspective. It might, however, be complained as some reviewers have, that Mr. Hardy has not dealt satisfactorily with all the pertinent facts even now available.[1] He is too prone to apologize for Mr. King and to make him the hero of the piece; he is too disposed also to write a human interest story. His subject was hardly such a paragon of political wisdom as here portrayed, even although we may accept his judgment that Mr. King was "a supreme tactician possessing an uncanny sense of timing."

The other volume embraces a selection of some thirty-eight speeches by Mr. Arthur Meighen, published under the title, *Unrevised and Unrepented*. Most of these speeches are on political and public questions, and many were delivered in either the House of Commons or the Senate. Others were given on special occasions outside parliament, but were usually on matters of major public importance. All exhibit a brilliant mind, an impressive skill in parliamentary exposition, a keen insight into events, and a deep sense of conviction. Published speeches commonly make poor reading, but these are a notable exception. They vividly convey ideas, and illuminate many events that figure in the politics of the generation now ending. A notable speech on the constitutional crisis of 1926, for example, can suitably be read alongside Mr. Hardy's somewhat different account of that incident.

It is of interest to examine these speeches for the light that they throw upon modern Canadian conservatism or at least upon the ideas of one who has been the most brilliant, although not the most astute, leader of the Canadian Conservative party in the present century. In this respect they are disappointing if one expects the exposition of a coherent conservative outlook or system of thought in the Old-World sense. Mr. Meighen's mind is peculiarly British and empirical, with a special concern for the particular and the concrete. He certainly makes no attempt to create a cult of tradition. What indeed as a Conservative he seeks mainly to conserve are the essentials of a genuine liberalism, with an emphasis upon the individual's responsibility for his fate, a responsibility which he naturally extends to the nation. "When we take upon ourselves the rank and stature and rights of nationhood we take upon ourselves all the dangers and duties which nationhood implies." Mr. Meighen never shrank from emphasizing the national duties, whatever the political costs to himself. To this fact the speeches in this book bear testimony.

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[1] See, for example, a review of this book by Mr. Grant Dexter in the *Winnipeg Free Press,* Dec. 31, 1949.

The brief autobiography of a very different type of man from Mr. King or Mr. Meighen is *All My Life* by the Reverend A. E. Smith. It relates the life story of one who began his career as a bookbinder in a Hamilton printing shop, went to Manitoba in 1890 as a probationary minister on a circuit of the Methodist Church, became a leading figure in the Manitoba Conference, and then after 1917 transformed his Methodist faith into an ardent belief in modern communism (Christianity for him had always meant a kind of social gospel). That his transformation from a Methodist into a Marxian Communist was a genuine conversion is made clear enough in the pages of this book. The Communist party of Canada he describes as "the political repository of the treasure of Marxism, the golden truth, dug from the very heart of the experience of human society. This truth is comparable to the pearl of great price which when a man sees, he will sell all he possesses and buy." He expresses later his sentiments after reading the *Communist Manifesto* that "it was like a revelation of a new world into which I felt I must enter and to which I seemed to belong." It was then (after the Russian Revolution of 1917) that he became more than ever convinced that Jesus was a Communist and that the doctrines of Lenin furthered the society which Jesus would have men establish. The author is not a sophisticated Marxian, but a naïve humanitarian; his book has some sociological interest.

In *The Diary of Simeon Perkins, 1766-1780,* edited with an introduction and notes by Professor H. A. Innis, the Champlain Society has once again published a very interesting historical document, illuminating the economic, political, and social institutions of Nova Scotia in the critical years when the storm of revolution demolished much of the structure of the First British Empire. The diary of this typical New Englander from Connecticut, who came to reside in the little settlement of Liverpool, Nova Scotia, has already been much utilized by historians, notably by Professor J. B. Brebner in his monograph, *The Neutral Yankees of Nova Scotia: A Marginal Colony during the Revolutionary Years* (1933), and by a writer of historical fiction, Thomas H. Raddall, who drew upon it heavily in *His Majesty's Yankees* (1942). The present admirable edition (which does not however embrace all of the diary) will ensure its wider use not merely by professional writers but by general readers interested in the primary sources of history.

There is the usual crop of miscellaneous histories. *The Disciples of Christ in Canada since 1830* by Reuben Butchart is a stout compendium of information (674 pages in all) on members of this church and its various congregations throughout Canada. With its closely packed biographical detail and abundant illustrations the book in many places reads more like a biographical dictionary than a history, and a shocking omission in a work so large is the absence of an index or other guide to the factual matter. *A Century of Western Ontario* by Orlo Miller traces the history of the *Free Press* of London, founded in 1849, and under the proprietorship of the Blackburn family since 1852. The author at the same time attempts to describe the history of the London area as illustrated in the files of the *Free Press*. The book has some interesting sections, but on the whole this attempt to combine the story of a newspaper with local history (and some national history thrown in) is not successful, for it fails to tell us enough that is illuminating about either. The semi-dramatized treatment and the invented speeches put into the mouths of historical characters will disturb anyone with a delicate sense of historical propriety. *The Royal Canadian Institute Centennial Volume, 1849-1949,* edited by W. Stewart Wallace, adds to our meagre knowledge of the history of science in Canada as well as of popular education. Considerably more than half the volume contains ten surveys by distinguished authorities on the principal sciences in Canada throughout the last hundred years. The remainder relates the story of the Royal Canadian Institute itself, and embraces an extensive appendix with brief biographical sketches of the officers and councillors of the Institute since 1849. Of allied interest is *A History of Chemistry in Canada,* prepared for the Chemical Institute by C. J. S. Warrington and R. V. V. Nicholls. In this large, illustrated, and well-organized volume there is an impressive marshalling of knowledge on almost every phase of chemistry in the country, and specially interesting sections describe the relation of the science to the utilization of natural resources. To the economic historian and business man, no less than the scientist, this book will be an invaluable source of information. A well-edited addition to the materials for social history is *A Documentary Study of the Establishment of the Negroes in Nova Scotia,* prepared by Mr. C. B. Fergusson and published by the Public Archives of Nova Scotia. Some sixty-seven pages of text trace the history of negroes in Nova Scotia to the winning of responsible government, and the remainder and greater part of the volume contains documents illustrating this phase of history. *The Excavation of Ste Marie I* by Kenneth E. Kidd is more strictly archaeology than history although obviously useful to historians of culture in the French period. This handsome volume, with excellent plates and drawings, describes the findings in the excavation of the site known as Ste Marie I on the Wye River, near Midland, which significantly augment the knowledge of the Huron culture and Jesuit missions hitherto derived mainly from written documents.

A general history is *Our Canada* by Professor Arthur G. Dorland of the University of Western Ontario. It is a broad survey from the voyages of the Norsemen to the signing of the Atlantic Treaty in 1949, and is evidently intended for senior students in school and the general readers outside. Clear writing, balanced treatment, admirable maps and illustrations are its merits, but the shiny paper and the gloomy text-bookish appearance of the pages are unfortunate blemishes. Professor Dorland's general history may suitably be paired with *Democratic Government in Canada* by Professor R. MacG. Dawson. This little volume, lucidly written and attractive in format, describes the institutional structure of the state in 129 pages of text, and contains in appendices the British North America Act and its seven amending acts.

Three historical studies by Canadians on other than Canadian themes merit comment. Professor Goldwin Smith of Wayne University, the author of a valuable monograph on *The Treaty of Washington,* writes *A History of England* for Scribner's "Historical Series." Anything like a review of this comprehensive college text, which begins with neolithic culture and comes down to a chapter on "Today and Tomorrow" lies outside the scope of this survey, but one may note its fresh arrangement of material, distinguished style, and handsome format.

Canada has few specialists in medieval history, but two of these few published significant studies within the year. In *The Formation of the German College of Electors in the Mid-Thirteenth Century,* Professor C. C. Bayley of McGill University examines the triangular contest of emperors or would-be emperors, princes, and popes in the thirteenth century which resulted in the formation of the German College of Electors. His work is perhaps the most important in English on the medieval constitution of Germany that has yet appeared. It combines a brief survey of the conflicts between the Empire and the Papacy which grew out of the "conversion" of the Roman Empire in the fourth century, with an original and convincing account of the elections in the thirteenth century. Political and constitutional analysis looms large, perhaps too large, at the expense of the characters and ideas of the persons involved. Nevertheless, and partly because of this characteristic, a high level of clarity and objectivity is attained. Professor Bayley's scholarship is not obtrusive; he uses well-attested sources, sticks to his main task, and is convincing in his thoroughness. The value of his book would be much enhanced by some genealogical tables and a good map, as such aids are not always available.

Catalan Domination of Athens 1311-1388 by Professor Kenneth M. Setton of the University of Manitoba breaks almost entirely new ground in English scholarship, as far as this reviewer is aware. It is a work of great and recondite erudition. Many historians would feel a sense of frustration in tracing the lives and work of men who have had no influence worth mentioning on the main stream of civilization. But Professor Setton pursues his task with an enthusiasm for detail, and a zeal for unravelling a mystery which often holds the reader when the facts seem as dead as history can be. Occasionally the material dominates even this indefatigable author, and one is inclined to doubt the relevance of some detail, e.g. the descriptions of late medieval Athens so carefully recorded in chapter XI. The subject of Professor Setton's work is not in itself unimportant. It tells us much of the chaotic conditions of the Eastern Empire in the century before its collapse, of the resource and vigour of the medieval Catalans, reminiscent of the Normans whom they succeeded in so many ways, and of the beginnings of that Spanish expansion into the central Mediterranean, which was to be so vital a factor in the long-drawn Hapsburg-Valois struggles of the early modern period. By their books, Professors Bayley and Setton have advanced proof of the variety and strength of Canadian work in the field of medieval European studies.[2]

Among Canadian economic studies is *Wartime Economic Co-operation* by R. Warren James, an able monograph, grounded in extensive research into the collaboration founded on the Hyde Park Declaration of 1941. Since Mr. James is a former official of the Wartime Prices and Trade Board and of the Combined Production and Resources Board in Washington (1942-5), he writes with actual experience of the co-operation which he describes and assesses, but throughout exhibits a cool objective spirit and does not shrink from criticism of what was done. *Labor Dictionary* by Professor P. H. Casselman of the University of Ottawa is a concise and well-printed encyclopaedia of the labour movement and industrial relations. It is easy to think of suitable additions to the entries. The number of biographical notes on labour leaders, for example, could helpfully be extended, and one certainly wonders why some are in and others are out. But Professor Casselman's aim has been to keep it as a brief handbook, and for additional information he appends a select bibliography. It is a useful work even if one doubts whether it will much contribute, as its author optimistically hopes, "to the attainment of industrial peace." *By Their Fruits* by William Henry Moore is a little book of cogitations by a thoughtful and learned Canadian, who is here concerned, as in some former essays, to raise doubts about the aspiration of those enthusiastic souls who assume that the advance of collectivism must mean social progress. Mr. Moore is disposed to think that it means the grim paralysis of civilization, and is not timid in arguing the point. A brief book with a singularly different outlook is *Pioneer in Community* by Watson Thomson, which describes the life and discusses the co-operative ideas and zeal of Henri Lasserre, a Swiss lawyer who settled in Canada and worked with remarkable devotion to further co-operation in this country. The principal product of his activity was the Robert Owen Foundation of Canada, established in 1943 to encourage and aid co-operative communities.

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[2] The two preceding reviews were kindly submitted by Mr. M. R. Powicke.

Two valuable books by American scholars on aspects of Canadian government and administration may logically be bracketed together: *Financing Canadian Government* by Mr. A. E. Buck of the Institute of Public Administration of New York and the author of standard works on the institutional phases of public finance, and *The Canadian Bureaucracy* by Professor Taylor Cole of Duke University, the author of other studies on bureaucracy and the editor of the *American Political Science Review*. Limitations of space preclude an adequate review of either volume, but we may comment upon them as an excellent tribute to the growing and helpful interest of American social scientists in Canadian life. The appearances of these works and the near appearance of others indicate how Americans not merely invest their capital in Canada, but are now also investing the energies and intelligence of mature scholars, who study the problems of this country with an objectivity which should be easier for outsiders to attain. This scholarly activity is hardly a form of American imperialism, and even if it is so regarded, we can welcome it, especially when it appears with the good judgment and fine insight shown in both these volumes. Mr. Buck presents a careful survey in thirteen lucid chapters of the modes of financing Canadian government at its three levels, federal, provincial, and municipal. In his discussion of federal finance he includes the arrangements made for inclusion of Newfoundland in the federation. His work was originally designed for readers in the United States, but actually it constitutes for Canadians the only modern book on the subject and it is not mere description. Some of its most illuminating sections contain shrewd comparisons of the fiscal experience of Britain, Canada, and the United States.

Professor Cole's concern is not with bureaucracy in any invidious sense but with public employees in the federal and provincial administration (including those in public corporations) considered as a group providing services to the people. His study covers the years 1939-47, when a gigantic growth occurred in the activities of government and when its agencies were strained as never before. He analyses with immense patience and a calm spirit the structure and functioning of public employment, examining the nature of organization, the salaries paid, the associations of employees, and the quality of co-ordination and control. Here is not a mere formal regimenting of facts, but discriminating criticism, explicit or implicit. The book explores a field hitherto inadequately studied in Canada, and one may hope that it will encourage further and critical study, especially by public agencies themselves.

This survey may conclude with reference to a book of wide range. *Stability* by Mr. F. E. Dessauer is a thoughtful and erudite treatment of an important theme with implications in many phases of life, but especially in economics and politics. Mr. Dessauer does not effectively organize his material for the ordinary reader, who in the early chapters is left groping as to the direction of the road. This is not a fault of the actual writing which is clear and attractive, but of the abstruse method and design which will unfortunately discourage some readers from discovering the wise and interesting things that Mr. Dessauer has to say. The author illustrates the rich variety of the concept in the works of various thinkers in different ages. The Greeks were much concerned with it, but their outlook was different from that prevalent in the Middle Ages, and in turn the views of medieval philosophers and theologians were significantly distinct from those of the modern age that came with the Reformation in Western Europe. Each period and school of thought places on the term a somewhat different connotation. In the contemporary world the necessity and yearning for stability are evident, but one lays down Mr. Dessauer's book without any great sense of comfort. The difficulties of achieving stability in every sphere are great, and perhaps greatest of all in international relations. Stability of course can usually be had on certain terms, but not the terms that will long retain the approval of men, because justice and freedom are not guaranteed. As the author remarks, calling upon the testimony of St. Augustine, peace is not all, and the peace of the unjust is no peace, for it can neither satisfy nor last.

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*Bardon (Richard) and *Nute (G. L.) eds., A winter in the St. Croix valley: George Nelson's reminiscences, 1802-03; with an introduction and notes (St. Paul, Minn., Minnesota Historical Society, 1948, 46 pp., 50c.). Bayley (C. C.), The formation of the German college of electors in the mid-thirteenth century (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, x, 237 pp., $4.00). *Buck (A. E.), Financing Canadian government (Chicago, Public Administration Service, xiv, 367 pp., $5.00). Butchart (Reuben), The Disciples of Christ in Canada since 1830; foreword by Donald E. Pratt (Toronto, Canadian Headquarters Publications, Churches of Christ (Disciples), xvi, 674 pp., $4.00). Canada, Department of External Affairs,

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*The asterisk indicates that the author is not a Canadian, but concerned with a Canadian subject.

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V. BIOGRAPHICAL, CRITICAL, AND MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS

THE EDITOR AND OTHERS

This final section of the survey of English-Canadian letters is the work this year of about a dozen contributors, half of whom have written reviews of one book only. Once again the plan has been adopted of introducing sub-headings (with arabic numbers) to indicate the different areas in the section and the principal reviewer in each sub-section.

1. *Biography and Autobiography*

THE EDITOR

In this sub-section, the review of Harry Hussey's *Venerable Ancestor: The Life and Times of Tz'u Hsi, 1835-1908, Empress of China* has been contributed by Professor L. C. Walmsley of the Department of East Asiatic Studies. Another biography, *Mackenzie King of Canada* by H. R. Hardy, is noticed in Section IV, among the Social Studies. Two other volumes are noticed in sub-section 4, "Books on Art": biographies of E. Grace Coombs and Katherine E. Wallis.

Tom Cullen of Baltimore by Judith Robinson is a biography of the distinguished surgeon and gynaecologist of Johns Hopkins who went, as a young graduate in medicine, from Toronto to Baltimore in 1889, like William Osler before him, and, except for a period of study abroad, has been happily at work there since. In the first seventy-five pages, which tell of his

Canadian boyhood as the son of a Methodist minister, we have a mildly sentimental idyll of family life in a succession of parsonages "on the old Ontario strand." The rest of the book, beginning with Dr. Cullen's arrival in Baltimore at a marvellous time in the development of pathology and surgery, and of Johns Hopkins, is the record of sixty years' achievement as member of a group remarkable for its work in research, in clinical practice, and in the teaching of students and the public. Miss Robinson has evidently had a very extensive collection of letters and papers to draw on, plus the opportunity of frequent conversation with her subject. She has produced a remarkable book, although it is her first attempt at biography. It is the story of a man, of a university department, and, indirectly, of the advances in the science and practice of surgery in one lifetime. I found the latter the most interesting—from the antediluvian days of the fashionable London surgeon who operated in a black Prince Albert coat, without bothering about asepsis, and who told young Dr. Cullen that bacteriology was "all poppy-cock." The story of the man is by a hero-worshipper whose admiration goes back to the childhood and youth which she has imagined, and never fails in the later years. The reader may occasionally wish that Miss Robinson had been able to find one or two human shortcomings in her grand old veteran of medical science, but apparently she could not.

J. H. Cranston has had no such difficulty with his subject in *Etienne Brûlé: Immortal Scoundrel*. Brûlé, the first of the *coureurs de bois*, was evidently both a daring explorer and a disreputable character. He scandalized the Jesuit missionaries in Huronia who reported that he was "very vicious in character and much addicted to women"; he helped to betray Quebec and Champlain, his long-suffering master, to Admiral Kirke and the English; and he finally achieved the distinction of being the first white man to be eaten by the Indians. Yet he was, also, apparently the first explorer to see Lake Huron, Lake Superior, and Lake Ontario, and the first tourist to visit the Toronto area. The book is a plain chronological narrative of his travels and intrigues, nowhere near as lurid as the author keeps leading us to expect.

Tz'u Hsi, known more familiarly to the Western world as the "Empress Dowager," is recognized by China as one of her four greatest women. A number of biographies of her have been written in English, but for skilfully sifting out new facts from the glamour and gossip surrounding this remarkable woman, Mr. Harry Hussey in *Venerable Ancestor* seems to have surpassed them all.

Mr. Hussey was eminently fitted for the task he set himself. He lived in China many years. He made friends easily with the nobility, and he worked on occasion with the common labourers. He occupied positions of high authority: he was adviser to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and accompanied Dr. Wellington Koo to the first meeting of the United Nations in San Francisco.

When he first arrived in Peking within a decade of her death, Mr. Hussey found that the "Old Empress" was already rapidly becoming a legend. He became intrigued by the stories he heard about her, and with the skill of an accomplished detective he began to pare away the accumulating layers of fiction. As a result, he found the true Tz'u Hsi emerging an even more amazing figure than the one created by popular imagination.

Any attempt to delineate in a few words the character of this giant among historical figures would be inadequate. That she is a giant there can be no question. From earliest childhood she faced and triumphed over a continual series of difficulties that would have completely discouraged any but the most resolute. Nor were her trials ended when by good fortune she, only a secondary wife, presented the Emperor with his first-born son. She had to reinforce this advantage by strategy, intrigue, hard work, driving herself through years of seemingly fruitless study to achieve her end. She exercised sheer power of personality in situations so delicate, so electric with suspicion and enmity, that one false judgment would have meant her final destruction. She waged wars to cover up mistakes, and as quickly halted sieges in order to enjoy an afternoon with friends on her lake. Her courage was superb. She stood alone on the steps of the palace and defied the undisciplined Boxers when her cowardly generals to the last man had fled in terror.

In Mr. Hussey's book we find a few cases where he accepts the conventional explanation for certain events. But these are relatively unimportant. As we see him unearth bit by bit the missing information which helps us to complete the strange mosaic of Tz'u Hsi's life, we find ourselves experiencing some of the delight which one feels when fitting in the last pieces of a difficult jig-saw puzzle. He does not attempt to solve all problems. Here and there only clues are left for us to complete our own picture. Did Kuang Hsü, the Emperor kept in virtual imprisonment by Tz'u Hsi, die the day before she did, poisoned by her order, as many history books would have us believe? Or did he die the day after her death, poisoned through the connivance of Yüan Shih-k'ai? Or did he, after all, die about the same time as Tz'u Hsi, of starvation and neglect, as Mr. Hussey intimates? We may never know.

Only two autobiographical books have reached me, both by women and both, in part, observations from without on the life and world of a profession.

Ruth Harvey's world in *Curtain Time* is the theatre—in Winnipeg, before and during the First World War. She begins her book with earliest childhood memories: "There were always the two houses. 'At the house' or 'cleaning the house'—that was the house we lived in. 'The house will be dark next week'—that was our theatre." Her father ("papa," she always calls him, without any suggestion, incidentally, of the Broadway piety that profitably memorializes parents as egregious zanies) was the owner and manager of the Walker Theatre; "mamma" had been on the stage, and still spent as much time as she could in their theatre. To it came an astonishing succession of notable plays and first-rate actors and companies from both New York and London, as well as operatic singers—in those remote times before the triumph of the movie and the radio. And there was often less high-brow entertainment. The book is rich with humorous and vivid memories and anecdotes: Mme Schumann-Heinck having a cozy chat with mamma over their Limburger cheese and beer; the Walkers' Scottish maid who could bring the splendour of high tragedy into the kitchen with her readings from *Macbeth;* the chariot-race in *Ben Hur;* papa's firm way of ensuring that his troupe of much sought-after lady bicycle-riders would be in the theatre and sober for their act; Mrs. Patrick Campbell, bowing with outstretched arms and "a divine smile" at each curtain call after *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray,* and then, every time the curtain dropped before her, thumbing her nose at the rapturous Winnipeg audience beyond—for reasons that had nothing whatever to do with Winnipeg or the audience. The book is also rich in memorable description and comments beyond the world of the theatre. Affection, gusto, and a wonderful power of observation are apparent in pages on the prairie scene, the city of Winnipeg, the seasons (both of them, and that lovely temperate day last week which must have been spring), the influence of the Scots on the history and character of the West, and many other subjects. In short, I thought that *Curtain Time* was a thoroughly enjoyable book.

The world of *For Goodness' Sake* by Nancy Jones is the world of a clergyman's wife in the Methodist and then the United Church, in a succession of congregations, all tactfully described as wonderful, but the most recent the best of all. The book combines features of the autobiography, the familiar essay, and the instructive handbook. In the course of her reminiscences of domestic and parochial life, the author sometimes digresses to generalize briefly about, say, visitors and visiting; and she frequently returns to her didactic purpose which is to give advice to the young clergyman's wife. This is a pleasant, unpretentious, ably written book which should appeal to its particular audience.

CHECK-LIST OF TITLES

CRANSTON (J. H.), Etienne Brûlé, immortal scoundrel (Toronto, Ryerson, xvi, 144 pp., $3.00). GRIFFIN (W. H.), Three score years (Toronto, Griffin Agency, 226 Bay St., 1948, 51 pp.). HARVEY (RUTH), Curtain time (Boston, Houghton Mifflin; Toronto, Allen, x, 310 pp., $3.75). HUSSEY (HARRY), Venerable ancestor: the life and times of Tz'u Hsi, 1835-1908, Empress of China; drawings by SHIRLEY

Wang (New York and Toronto, Doubleday, xxiv, 354 pp., $4.50). **Jones (Nancy)**, For goodness' sake (Toronto, Ryerson, viii, 291 pp., $3.00). **Macvicar (Helena)**, Margaret Scott, a tribute: the Margaret Scott nursing mission (Winnipeg, Stovel, 1948, 28 pp., 50c.). **Meilicke (E. J.)**, Leaves from the life of a pioneer: being the autobiography of a sometime senator, Emil Julius Meilicke (Vancouver, Wrigley Printing Co., 1948, xv, 168 pp.). **Robinson (Judith)**, Tom Cullen of Baltimore (Toronto, Oxford, xii, 435 pp., $3.50). **Salverson (L. G.)**, Confessions of an immigrant's daughter (Montreal, Reprint Society of Canada, 523 pp., $1.50 to members). **University of Toronto, Victoria College**, In memoriam, Frank Louis Barber, 1877-1945 (Toronto, the College, 1948, 19 pp.).

2. *Literary and Critical Studies* THE EDITOR AND OTHERS

At least two volumes that belong in this sub-section, *Guido Cavalcanti's Theory of Love* by J. E. Shaw, and *The Philosophical Lectures of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* edited by Kathleen Coburn, are to be reviewed in a later number of the QUARTERLY. Another, *The Mosaic Tradition* by F. V. Winnett is noticed in the next sub-section among "Books on Religion."

The following review, of *Being and Some Philosophers* by Etienne Gilson, has been contributed by Dr. Emil Fackenheim of the Department of Philosophy in the University.

Among Professor Gilson's most significant contributions to the history of philosophy has been his insistence that the Greek heritage was not merely received but radically transformed in the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas. Here (and, one might add, in such other medieval philosophers as Maimonides) the biblical doctrine of creation inspired a more radical quest concerning the nature and origin of existence than was raised by the Greeks who tended to presuppose existence throughout; from this flowed the ontological distinction between essence and existence, and a transformation of the emanationist-necessitarian world of the Greeks (especially of Plotinus) into one established by a free Creator, and contingent upon His will.

In *Being and Some Philosophers,* Mr. Gilson is concerned with defending the truth of the Thomist position rather than with its exposition. His central thesis is that existence is elusive, that Aquinas is almost the only philosopher to grasp it philosophically, and that most other philosophers fall into one of two opposite errors. One of these is "essentialism"—the error of accounting for existence (the "that") by making it an essence (a "what"); the other is exemplified in such doctrines as modern existentialism which in its effort to grasp existence denies the reality of essence. Essence and existence are the central terms in Mr. Gilson's argument. Aquinas treats them successfully; among those who fail are Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, Avicenna, Averroes, Kant, Hegel, and the existentialists from Kierkegaard on.

There is something eminently sound in a work venturing to engage in a philosophic argument across the ages. An antidote to the all too prevalent historicism, such a work is especially refreshing when by a philosopher who is well versed in the entire history of philosophy, and who writes with vigour. Genuine insights emerge from Mr. Gilson's philosophic confrontation of the philosophers, especially in the case of those ancient philosophers already confronted by Aquinas himself. Outstanding examples are his treatment of Plotinus and his account of the reasons involving Aristotle in his famous difficulties concerning "being."

But there is also great danger in such a dialogue across the ages. It is questionable whether any of the great philosophers can be justly evaluated, or even fully understood, in the terms of another, even if they are terms as time-honoured as are essence and existence in Western thought. One wonders whether even Plato and Plotinus can have been as ignorant of existence as Mr. Gilson maintains. And if, in the case of Aristotle, existence "once evidenced by sense or concluded by rational argumentation . . . is tacitly dismissed" (p. 46), the question arises whether anyone can do more than that—anyone, that is, who does not hold (and is this on philosophical or theological grounds?) that there *is* a radical origin of existence, and an existing Creator who is its cause. The difficulties in Mr. Gilson's approach are even more obvious in his treatment of modern philosophers. To one approaching Kant quite certain of the truth of Thomist metaphysics, Kant's synthetic judgments *a priori* may be "nothing more than the mental dummy of being's existential causality" (p. 185); but the very thing in question is whether being has such a causality. Hegel's system, says Gilson, is an aesthetic creation; his end, as a philosopher, should have been to achieve truth (p. 213). That Hegel *did* seek truth, and was forced to seek it in the form of a system, can become fully clear only to one willing to enter into his problems; and only then a final judgment is possible as to the success or failure of his search. Mr. Gilson's critique of Kierkegaard, deeply perceptive in other respects, suffers from his unwillingness to take seriously the philosophic reasons forcing him to seek existence in subjectivity.

Mr. Gilson almost disarms the critic by his advance admission that his book is a philosophic confession, not a treatise in history. Almost, but not quite. The critic therefore finds his philosophic position impressive, and deserving serious attention. But of its capacity to withstand the criticism of the great philosophers who dissented, he will not even begin to be convinced until they are studied in terms which are not those of other philosophers but their own.

The next review is by Professor David Savan of the Department of Philosophy in the University.

Philosophy, when she was newly born, spoke with a profundity which laughed at mere wisdom, and with a poetry too tragic for mere wit. Today we must take the philosopher's wit on the wing, and search for his wisdom in the interstices of his argument. Professor A. H. Johnson offers us a goodly harvest in *The Wit and Wisdom of John Dewey,* and introduces it with an able and helpful summary of the major characteristics of his thought.

Mr. Johnson's is no easy achievement. It is difficult to find passages in Dewey's writing which are central, well turned, and capable of standing alone. It is equally difficult to summarize well a philosophy so extensive in its ramifications. Dewey's thought is, like his writing, discursive, wandering, and—in spite of its down-to-earth qualities—subtle. Mr. Johnson has caught, in his introduction, the spirit and motives as well as the conclusions of Dewey's philosophy. He has sought out a great variety of remarks, more wise than witty, in which Dewey's thought has paused before moving on again in its quest for the rational life.

Such a book as this serves a rather limited purpose. It is not in fact or intention a substitute for the sustained argument of Dewey's works. Few philosophers are less aphoristic in style than Dewey. And an introduction at its best prepares the way for a more personal acquaintance. But for those who wish to recall the pith and flavour of Dewey's thought, and for those who like to chew upon a meaty sentence, this book will fill some quiet and meditative hours.

Professor H. Steinhauer of the University of Manitoba has contributed the following review of H. Boeschenstein's *The German Novel, 1939-1944.*

Those who have been searching among the intellectual debris of the Third Reich are gradually digging out a few relics of genuine civilization. Professor Boeschenstein has rolled up his sleeves and thrust his spade into a pile of such rubble: he has read some four hundred novels published in the years between 1939 and 1944. But while other workers have brought to our attention only the few treasures of lasting value, Mr. Boeschenstein describes all that he has found. He gives us a cross-section of the German mind as revealed in this collection of novels.

What does he find? A surprising number of works which he is tempted to call masterpieces or near-masterpieces: novels by Wilhelm Weigand, Hans Carossa, Hermann Eris Busse, Erika Mitterer, Editha Klipstein, William von Simpson. Second: a considerable body of criticism of Nazi ideals—oblique criticism, to be sure, but nevertheless a refusal to prostitute art for prestige or profit.

One feels at ease in accepting Mr. Boeschenstein's awards of merit, because he burns with righteous indignation against the many malefactors, and in general adopts a critical attitude to the German "psyche." His yardstick is one of common sense and a healthy respect for earthy values, far removed from the cloud-cuckoo-land in which German criticism loves to float about.

The material of the book is divided by topic: peasant life (*Blubo*), proletarian life, the professions, history, the attitude to non-Germans. There are also chapters on the *Erziehungsroman* and on the survival of the Western tradition. Two chapters attempt to convey the basic moods that prevailed in Germany during these war years.

The largeness of the task which Professor Boeschenstein undertook necessarily confines him to a discussion of content. But there is an opening section on style, which reveals the fact that to this day German literature has remained extremely conservative in its diction. This is hardly surprising; for even in the experimental Weimar days, German literature was tame in this respect as compared with its Western neighbours. The Nazis were reactionaries in art; one can hardly expect them to have approved such manifestations of *Kulturbolschewismus* as the experiments of the younger Anglo-Americans.

Professor Boeschenstein's own style is clear and effective, a remarkable achievement for one who has learned English in maturity.

I am indebted to Professor W. T. E. Kennett of the Department of French in Trinity College for the following review of *Julie, or La Nouvelle Héloïse: A Synthesis of Rousseau's Thought* (*1749-1759*) by M. B. Ellis.

It is clear that Rousseau wrote his novel *Julie ou La Nouvelle Héloïse* to illustrate and justify an ethical system. The question as to what the heroine *ought* to do is raised at every page. And Julie actually accomplishes a sort of progress: the disturbed and irresolute creature of the opening letters becomes relatively self-possessed at the end of the book.

The sub-title is highly significant. Julie is indeed a "new" Héloïse, a repudiation of that view of life which, from the Rousseauist standpoint, brought the wife of Abélard (and, by implication, modern society) to grief. The passionate love of the original Héloïse must be condemned, since it produced suffering; her fidelity to her husband led to her retirement from the world, which was morally wrong since for Rousseau the supreme good is happiness in this world. Above all, useful social action must replace the soul-searchings of repentance.

Professor Ellis—and this is the chief contribution of her book—demonstrates the consistency of the moral philosophy implicit in *La Nouvelle Héloïse* with that set forth theoretically in Rousseau's earlier writings. Julie surmounts the *passion* that is related, in the second *Discours,* to the fallacious *amour-propre* of the "civilization-corrupted" individual and, by following the salutary *amour de soi,* the "natural" principle of self-preservation, achieves "redemption"—the word is Miss Ellis's own. This "enlightened self-interest" is the basis of the family institution, and Julie is inspired by it in acceding to her father's desire that she renounce Saint-Preux and marry Wolmar.

It is perhaps to be regretted that Miss Ellis does not adopt a more objective attitude in her presentation of this ethics. She uses such terms as "heroic," "virtuous," "sublime" with reference to Julie, and insists that the latter is "betrayed." This seems exaggerated. Julie, after all is said and done, is a very ordinary (but by no means unsophisticated) young woman who falls in love and has her fling with a young man of inferior social position and who then, thinking better of it, makes a good marriage and settles down to a life of material ease and somewhat condescending social uplift. The "moral triumph" to which Miss Ellis refers would seem to consist mainly in the fact that, once married, Julie does not commit adultery. If there is any betrayal in all this, it is Julie who is guilty of it: the question of her relationship to Saint-Preux is never satisfactorily resolved.

Miss Ellis' language is too often loosely metaphorical, and in general lacks precision. She shows a tendency to "labour the point" by unnecessary repetition. But her book is interesting and valuable, in that it does place *La Nouvelle Héloïse* more accurately than has hitherto been done in the general scheme of Rousseau's works.

The book contains an interesting preface by Professor A. F. B. Clark, under whom the author studied at the University of British Columbia.

King Lear: A Tragic Reading of Life, by John M. Lothian of the University of Saskatchewan, is a brief book in five chapters, each prepared originally as a lecture or paper, two of them for the radio. It is a popular work in the best sense of the term: it assumes and is addressed to an intelligent general audience; it is certainly not for those who, having "passed" Shakespeare in school or college, go on to find their intellectual satisfaction in the daily paper and the weekly *Life;* and it is not intended primarily for the academic specialist in Elizabethan studies, preoccupied with the problems discussed in learned journals. We may be grateful that these admirable lectures are now available in permanent form.

In so far as Professor Lothian's book can be placed in a critical tradition, it belongs with those works of which the most influential in this century has been A. C. Bradley's *Shakespearean Tragedy,* yet he takes issue with that book more than with any other, notably in his last chapter on "Structure and Significance in *King Lear,*" which is a vigorous and cogent refutation of Bradley's argument that "after the First Act, which is really filled by the exposition, Lear suffers but hardly initiates action at all; and the right way to look at the matter, from the point of view of construction, is to regard Goneril, Regan and Edmund as the leading characters." Mr. Lothian's contention is that Lear's growing awareness of himself and of life is the dynamic central fact of the tragedy, and so much the worse for "the point of view of construction" if the reader overlooks that fact. The tragic view of life to which Lear and the reader comes is not tempered by religious faith in God and a moral order (there is no suggestion of Milton's "All is best . . . And ever best found in the close"); rather it starkly suggests that despair to which our own age is so exposed. "The interpretation of the 'action' of *King Lear* which the reader has just read," Mr. Lothian concludes, "is an attempt to restore the spirit's progress of Lear, and its culmination in his appalling vision of chaos, of the chasm between reality and justice, to their central place in our conception of the play."

Another critical volume from the English Department in the University of Saskatchewan is *The Canadian West in Fiction* by Edward A. McCourt. The book contains separate chapters on Ralph Connor, Frederick Niven, and F. P. Grove as the most representative or notable novelists who use a Western setting, and there are introductory and concluding chapters on lesser figures and on "The Sum of Achievement." Mr. McCourt finds much of literary and social interest in these books, memorable pages and "a few people who are believable," but no "body of literature that tells adequately the story of the great prairie region," nor does he believe that any Canadian novel, of any region, "seems likely to become a part of the permanent literary heritage of mankind." Few readers, it seems to me, will want to quarrel seriously with Mr. McCourt's general findings except the professional literary chauvinists, but there will be many (though I am not one) who will disagree with his judgment that Grove's best work was not in the novel, "a medium for which he had little talent," but in the descriptive books, *Over Prairie Trails* and *The Turn of the Year*. Mr. McCourt has written a judicious and valuable book, which might well be the model for other regional literary studies. It is also entertaining. I am grateful for an introduction to Corporal William Donkin of the Mounties, author of *Trooper and Redskin*: it was he who insisted that there were really five divisions of the western Canadian year—the mosquito season, the black-fly season, the horse-fly season, the house-fly season, and winter.

Three other books in this section may be noticed briefly. The Reverend A. C. Pegis, President of the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto, has edited an excellent and handsomely printed anthology of nearly a thousand pages entitled *The Wisdom of Catholicism*. The writings begin with St. Ignatius of Antioch in the first century and end with Jacques Maritain and Etienne Gilson in the twentieth, and between there are fairly long excerpts from over thirty works including St. Augustine's *Confessions* and *The City of God,* Dante's *Paradiso,* Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales,* Pascal's *Pensées,* Newman's *Apologia,* and also three important papal encyclicals. Readers of the volume who are not Roman Catholics will be impressed by the scarcity of polemics in the selections chosen: there is comparatively little emphasis on the doctrines which have divided Christendom; rather here is a volume that, for the most part, represents the common Christian heritage through the centuries.

Another recent work of editorial scholarship is Gordon Roper's *The Scarlet Letter and Selected Prose Works by Nathaniel Hawthorne.* The volume contains, in addition to the novel, eight stories and sketches and selections from the prefaces and the notebooks. Professor Roper's introduction places *The Scarlet Letter* in relation to Hawthorne's life and his other writings, and includes a thorough and illuminating analysis of the novel as a masterpiece of fictional art.

Finally, *Keats: A Bibliography and Reference Guide with an Essay on Keats' Reputation* by the present reviewer may be merely mentioned. The reference guide is meant to give that assistance to the student of a major romantic poet which is already available for the study of some other English poets, and the long introductory essay traces the remarkable course of Keats' reputation over one hundred and thirty years.

No doubt, other Canadian literary and critical studies might have been noticed in this sub-section. However, because many of them are published abroad and review copies do not come to the Quarterly, some may be overlooked entirely. We ask the co-operation, once more, of both authors and publishers so that our lists may be made reasonably complete.

CHECK-LIST OF TITLES

Anderson (F. H.) ed., Symposium of Plato; with an introduction (New York, Liberal Arts Press, 1948, 64 pp.). Boeschenstein (H.), The German novel, 1939-1944 (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, viii, 189 pp., $3.25); Gottfried Keller: Grundzüge seines Lebens und Werkes (Bern, Haupt, 1948, 178 pp., $3.50). Coburn (K. H.) ed., The philosophical lectures of Samuel Taylor Coleridge (London, Eng., Pilot Press; New York, Philosophical Library; Toronto, McLeod, 480 pp., $9.75). Ellis (M. B.), Julie, or *La nouvelle Héloïse:* a synthesis of Rousseau's thought (1749-1759) (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, xxviii, 209 pp., $3.85). Eschmann (I. T.) trans., St. Thomas, On kingship, to the king of Cyprus; with critical notes and introduction (Toronto, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies). Fairley (Barker) ed., Goethe, Selected letters (1770-86); with an introduction (Blackwell's German texts; Oxford, Blackwell, xxviii, 205 pp.). Forbes (E. A.), The canonical separation of consorts: an historical synopsis and commentary on canons 1128-1132 (Universitas Catholica Ottaviensis, Series canonica, tomus 15; Ottawa, University of Ottawa Press, 1948, 281 pp.). Gilson (Etienne), Being and some philosophers (Toronto, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, xi, 219 pp.). Johnson (A. H.), The wit and wisdom of John Dewey (Boston, Beacon Press; Toronto, Saunders, x, 111 pp., $2.75). Lothian (J. M.), *King Lear:* a tragic reading of life (Toronto, Clarke Irwin, viii, 101 pp., $1.50). McCourt (E. A.), The Canadian West in fiction (Toronto, Ryerson, x, 131 pp., $3.00). MacGillivray (J. R.), Keats: a bibliography and reference guide with an essay on Keats' reputation (University of Toronto, Department of English, Studies and texts, no. 3; Toronto, University of Toronto Press, lxxxi, 210 pp., $5.00). Maurer (A.) trans., St. Thomas Aquinas, On being and essence; with introduction and notes (Toronto, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies). PEGIS (A. C.), ed., The wisdom of Catholicism; with an introduction and notes (New York, Random House; Toronto, Random House of Canada, xxx, 988 pp., $7.50). ROYAL SOCIETY OF CANADA, Transactions, Section II: literature, history, archaeology, sociology, political economy, and allied subjects, meeting of May, 1948 (Ottawa, the Society, 189 pp.). THE SCARLET LETTER and selected prose works by Nathaniel Hawthorne; introduction by GORDON ROPER (New York, Farrar Straus; Toronto, Gage, xlvi, 432 pp., $2.50). SHAW (J. E.), Guido Cavalcanti's theory of love: the *Canzone d'Amore* and other related problems (Romance series; Toronto, University of Toronto Press, x, 228 pp., $3.85).

3. *Books on Religion*

W. S. MCCULLOUGH

The Meaning of Christ for Paul by Professor Elias Andrews, of Pine Hill Divinity Hall, Halifax, is a substantial volume. The author assumes that only nine of the Pauline letters are genuine, and he therefore does not use the Pastoral epistles or Hebrews as source material. His other premises are that Paul's Christology is properly appraised only through "the radical transformation wrought in the life of Paul through the impact of the living Christ," which means that it is a Christology of Christian experience; that there is some elaboration and speculative advance discernible in Paul's thought over the years; that Paul did not advocate a gospel different from that intended by Jesus, but, on the contrary, that his views were accepted as orthodox by those who must have known the most primitive Christian teaching; and that Paul did not know as much about the mystery cults and Stoicism as is sometimes supposed.

Dr. Andrews' exposition of his subject displays none of the lively and informed imagination that T. R. Glover brought to this theme in *Paul of Tarsus* (1925), but it is competent and scholarly. The two principal divisions of the book are: "The Relation of Christ to Mankind" and "The Relation of Christ to God," and here we are offered a good survey of present-day views on Paul's Christology. On p. 128 we are told: "To him [Paul], Jesus was the object of religious faith. This is really the fundamental consideration in dealing with Pauline Christology."

There are two points that the author does not seem to emphasize sufficiently. One is that the Pauline letters are personal and occasional, and that they offer no consistent or systematic exposition of the apostle's views. The second is that much of what Paul thought and wrote is of interest only historically: it no longer has either importance or validity. This does not mean that Paul can be ignored. Indeed Professor Andrews' conviction is that the great apostle "has given to us a deeper and more essential understanding of Christianity than can be found elsewhere."

The Living Church, edited by the Reverend H. W. Vaughan, is a group of essays in memory of the Reverend Richard Davidson, whose academic career in Toronto was crowned by the principalship of Emmanuel College from 1932 to 1943. The opening chapter by Professor John Dow is a well-rounded biographical sketch of this somewhat shy and diffident man, who was at the same time a Semitic scholar, a theologian, a churchman, and a college administrator. While his scholarly attainments lay primarily in the Old Testament field, in his later years his favourite subject was the worship and liturgy of the Church. The remaining eight essays here presented, all by former students of Dr. Davidson, relate to various phases of the life and work of the Church, the best of them being a finely written chapter by Professor H. N. Frye on "The Church: Its Relation to Society." The book is a credit to the theological tradition which Emmanuel College is building up, and it is fitting homage to an esteemed teacher.

Professor N. H. Parker of McMaster University has contributed the following review, of *The Mosaic Tradition* by F. V. Winnett.

In *The Mosaic Tradition* Professor Winnett attempts to demolish the familiar Wellhausen theory of four main literary strata in the Pentateuch and more particularly that part of the theory which postulates the existence of two "prophetic" sources, those commonly known as J and E. Instead of four documents and the necessary redactors for putting them together he would have us see one early historical record (of northern origin), which was modified and expanded after the fall of Samaria by the Jerusalem priests who produced Deuteronomy, and which was finally compiled with the material commonly called P by other Jerusalem priests after the exile—who did all the final work of redaction.

Choosing to confine the test to that part of the Mosaic Tradition now embodied in Exodus and Numbers, Professor Winnett casts his work into seven chapters dealing, respectively, with the story of the plagues, the Egyptian bondage and deliverance therefrom, the giving of the Law, the Tent of Meeting, the wilderness itinerary, the murmurings and testings, and, finally, the corruption of the Mosaic Tradition by the Jerusalem priests. In each chapter detailed and skilful argument is advanced to establish the premise of a single original record and to trace its corruption. The long-accepted lines between J and E are erased; D and P are introduced as the revisers of J and the originators of much that has usually been assigned to E; and everything is recast in a sort of literary metric system of decalogues.

All Old Testament students know that it is easy to discern literary and ideological strata in the Pentateuch and difficult to draw precise lines of demarcation at every point between them. And all know the absurd extremes to which the occasional scholar goes in postulating the existence of authors and redactors necessary to the implementation of his particular notion of where the boundary lines actually lie. For that reason every sincere student will take up Professor Winnett's book with hopeful expectation; but it is the judgment of this reviewer that few or none who give it thorough study will be convinced in respect to the major premise. Reading the book at all properly is no light task, for every page abounds with challenging (if not provocative) statements and implications; hence an exhaustive review might well become a rebuttal and require another volume of similar length. Certain observations can be made, however, in even this brief notice.

At many points Professor Winnett provides helpful light and really makes his contention stick, e.g., his assignment of Exodus 32:25-35 to P instead of to E. But as for the main issue, he does not successfully account for the differences between J and E by attributing the most of E to D and P. He often verges upon arbitrariness, e.g., in assuming the historical integrity of D and P at some points and impeaching them at others, in endeavouring to reduce all codes to decalogues, and in attempting to establish the thesis of an original stylistic pattern where such a pattern is not now obvious. He builds too much upon inferences about *what ought to have been the case* with form, order, and content—a highly precarious venture when dealing with Hebrew compositions. Often he obscures the simple explanation with elaborate defence of a complex one, as in the chapter on the Tent of Meeting where his argument turns on the assumption that Joshua was an Ephraimite, whereas the only evidence for that supposition is a single harmonistic clause supplied by P (Numbers 13:16)—who is the villain of the book.

Professor Winnett's argument, it seems to me, is too elaborately ingenious to be stable. It demonstrates once more how difficult it is to make a complicated answer serve when a simple one is at hand. By "simple one" is meant the faithful old theory of four documents, to be accepted with patient reserve on the subject of precise differentiation.

In *The Terrors of the Year Two Thousand,* Professor E. Gilson is concerned over the tendencies of our age. It is not only that man has created the atom bomb and is exploring the possibilities of bacteriological warfare, but he has made "the capital discovery of modern times," that God is dead. Hence have sprung Marxism, surrealism, and existentialism, which in freeing man from God, deliver him to various forms of slavery. These are the terrors of today. And the remedy? "It is in losing God that man has lost his reason: he will not find it again without having first found God again." This is, in as real a sense as the Oxford Movement ever used the phrase, "a Tract for the Times."

Another comment on our age, *Faith of a Scientist* by H. B. Speakman, Director of the Ontario Research Foundation, contains three addresses by this distinguished scientist. They reflect his own dissatisfaction with scientific materialism as a philosophy of life, and his search for meaning in a chaotic world. He, of course, upholds the role of science in contributing to human comfort and happiness, but he appeals to humanism to restore the nobility, dignity, and responsibility of man, and to religion to support the absolute values and to furnish the power whereby ethical ideals can be translated into life.

The Substance of the Bible by F. F. Farrington can best be described as a devotional and mystical approach to its subject, about seven-eighths of which concerns the Old Testament. Allegory, typology, the law of multiplicity, the law of individuality, the principle of polarity, and some illustrations (one of which is Gideon's threshing floor, which is an important symbol!) combine to produce an unusual and fantastic book, which however sheds no light upon the substance of the Bible.

Finally, *Back of the Bible* by A. E. Lavell is a sixty-four page outline of the historical background of the Bible for the non-theological student. It is a straightforward account of the well-known facts, but in view of the plethora of good books, large and small, on biblical history, it is difficult to account for the appearance of this little book.

CHECK-LIST OF TITLES

ANDREWS (ELIAS), The meaning of Christ for Paul (New York and Nashville, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press; Toronto, G. R. Welch, 266 pp., $3.00). CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA, A short history of the Catholic church in southern Alberta, diocese of Calgary, 1865-1948 (Calgary, the League, 1948, 51 pp.). CHESTER (E. A.), What are we waiting for? (Toronto, Ryerson, viii, 47 pp., $1.00). CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN CANADA, MISSIONARY SOCIETY, One family: the story of the overseas missions of the Church of England in Canada; pt. 2 (Toronto, the Society, 604 Jarvis St., 1948, 43 pp., $1.00). CRAIG (H. A.), St. Stephen's Church, Westmount: one-hundredth anniversary, 1848-1948 (Westmount, Que., the Church, 1948, 36 pp.). FARRINGTON (F. F.), The substance of the Bible: revised from original daily lessons given by Mr. Farrington to a select group and re-written for book publication by ROBERT G. HODGSON (Toronto, Hodgson Publications, Box 7, Station K, 214 pp., $5.00). GILSON (ETIENNE), The terrors of the year two thousand (Toronto, St. Michael's College, 31 pp.). HART (W. T.), Sixty-three years of uninterrupted service: Fort Rouge Methodist Church, 1883-1925; Crescent Congregational Church, 1910-1925; Fort Rouge United Church, Crescent United Church, 1925-1935; Crescent—Fort Rouge United Church, 1935-1945: historical sketch (Winnipeg, Bishop Printing Co., 1947, 91 pp.). HERN (GORDON) comp., The voice of the shepherd: words of the late Derwyn Trevor Owen (Toronto, Church of England in Canada, Supplies Dept., 1948, 105 pp.). LAVELL (A. E.), Back of the Bible: an outline of the historical background of the Bible for the non-theological student (Toronto, Ryerson, 1948, viii, 64 pp., $1.00). LEARD (G. A.), Historic Bedeque: the Loyalists at work and worship in Prince Edward Island: a history of Bedeque United Church (Bedeque, the Church, 1948, 172 pp., $1.25). SPEAKMAN (H. B.), Faith of a scientist: science, humanism, and Christian education (Toronto, Clarke Irwin, vi, 79 pp., $1.50). VAUGHAN (H. W.) ed., The living church: a book in memory of the life and work of Rev. Richard Davidson, M.A., Ph.D., D.D.

Principal of Emmanuel College, Toronto (Toronto, United Church Publishing House, x, 193 pp., $2.50). **Ware** (F. B.), History of Cronyn Memorial Church, London, Ont., 1873-1949 (London, the Church, xvi, 329 pp.). **Winnett** (F. V.), The Mosaic tradition (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, xii, 219 pp., $3.75).

4. *Books on Art*

D. W. Buchanan

No work of importance on the fine arts has been printed in Canada during the period under review. Valuable as a record, however, is *Lawren Harris, Paintings, 1910-1948,* a catalogue of an exhibition of work which was organized by the Art Gallery of Toronto late in 1948 and circulated throughout Canada by the National Gallery in 1949. This booklet contains a few friendly comments by A. Y. Jackson about Harris and his work, with reference mainly to his Group of Seven period. These are written in Jackson's usual straightforward and candid style. There is also a critical appreciation of the paintings by Sydney Key.

Two women, E. Grace Coombs and Katherine E. Wallis, both relatively minor artists, have been recognized in short monographs, one privately printed and the other privately financed, which will be of interest mainly to these artists' own friends and acquaintances.

Publicity is given to the work of Canada's many commercial artists in the *First Annual* of the Art Directors Club, an illustrated review of recent Canadian advertising and editorial art, as selected from works shown at an exhibition held in 1949 by the Club, in Toronto. The examples shown are not completely representative; strangely, only a few productions from Montreal appear. In addition, despite a pleasing enough arrangement of illustrations on the pages, the printing is poor, and many of the reproductions suffer as a result. If one takes this book as any criterion, only a limited number of artists, such as Clair Stewart in posters and labels, and Oscar Cahen in magazine illustration, seem to be demonstrating any distinctive realization of their talents in commercial design. Yet this is perhaps more because of that yearning for the commonplace and that fear of originality which is present among so many advertising and publication sponsors in Canada than it is any fault of the artists themselves. While there is a time lag here, Canada is yet slowly catching up with contemporary achievements in the graphic arts and, as she does, these annuals should improve greatly from year to year.

Linked to the campaign which the National Gallery of Canada has launched to raise the standard of public appreciation of good design in manufactured products, is the neatly illustrated booklet *Canadian Designs for Everyday Use*. It depicts sixty-one original Canadian product designs of merit, which have been selected out of currently available consumers' goods for inclusion in the Canadian Design Index, a project maintained by the National Gallery. That more such items could not be found shows how much in its infancy industrial design still is in this country.

Autobiographical writing is not common among Canadian painters; in fact, few of them ever have indulged in this form of self-expression. Paul-Emile Borduas, the leader of the *automatiste* group of Quebec artists, has, however, in his *Projections libérantes* now given us a fresh and originally written, although highly personal, statement about his philosophy of art and education and how this philosophy led him into bitter conflict with officialdom in Quebec. Some of the best passages describe how he acquired a new freedom in painting from observing the more spontaneous world of vision to be found among the children he at one time taught in Montreal schools. His explanation of his own aesthetic aims will interest all contemporary artists.

CHECK-LIST OF TITLES

ART DIRECTORS CLUB, First annual of advertising and editorial art: reproductions of the first annual Art Directors Exhibition of advertising and editorial art, held at Eatons Fine Art Galleries, Toronto, Canada, April 1949 (Toronto, N. A. MacEachern, 78 pp., $4.00). ART GALLERY OF TORONTO, Lawren Harris, paintings, 1910-1948 (Toronto, the Gallery, 1948, 38 pp.). BORDUAS (PAUL-EMILE), Projections libérantes (Montréal, Mithra-Mythe, 40 pp., 50c.). COLLINS (A. R.), Katherine E. Wallis, Canadian sculptor (Fort Erie, Review Co. for the author, c/o Bank of Montreal, Walkerton, Ont., 52 pp., $3.50). GAITSKELL (C. D.), Art and crafts in our schools (Toronto, Ryerson, x, 62 pp., $1.00). NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA, Annual report of the Board of Trustees for the fiscal year 1947-48 (Ottawa, the Gallery, 20 pp., plates); Canadian designs for everyday use (Ottawa, the Gallery, 52 pp.); Catalogue of paintings (Ottawa, the Gallery, 1948, 272 pp.). PIERCE (LORNE), E. Grace Coombs [Mrs. James Sharp Lawson], A.O.C.A., O.S.A. (Toronto, Ryerson, iv, 32 pp., plates, $5.00). ROYAL CANADIAN ACADEMY OF ARTS, Illustrated catalogue, seventieth annual exhibition, 1949, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (Toronto, the Academy, c/o the Secr., H. S. Palmer, 170 St. Clements Ave., 16 pp.). WEBSTER (J. C.), Catalogue of the John Clarence Webster Canadiana collection (pictorial section), New Brunswick Museum (Catalogue no. 3; Saint John, New Brunswick Museum, 140 pp.).

5. *Canadians in the Second World War*

HUGH N. MACLEAN

Outstanding among books received this year dealing with the Second World War is *The R.C.A.F. Overseas: The Sixth Year,* the third and final volume of the official history, which carries the account of R.C.A.F. operations from September, 1944 to the end of hostilities in August, 1945. Like preceding volumes, it covers in detail the activities of every branch of the service, for the most part following the operations of each squadron from month to month, paying careful attention to especially important missions and singling out for individual attention many pilots and aircrews. An especially interesting and well-written chapter deals with the activities of the Lynx, Nighthawk, and Cougar Squadrons (otherwise 406, 409, and 410 Squadrons), which were assigned to duty as night fighters and intruders; another concerns R.C.A.F. units in Coastal Command, and their various methods of attack on U-boats and enemy shipping. Although the book deals chiefly with R.C.A.F. activities in the European theatre, there is a section devoted to operations in Burma and in South-East Asia generally. Statistical tables bear impressive witness to the effectiveness both of bomber and of fighter-bomber attacks on a huge variety of targets; another lists the top-scoring Canadian fighter pilots. The book, and indeed the whole set of three volumes, is sure to be of the greatest interest to lay readers and Air Force veterans alike. A Roll of Honour and a list of decorations awarded to R.C.A.F. personnel are appended to this volume.

Two regimental histories have come to hand, one from each of the theatres of war of special interest to Canadian Army veterans. *The Regimental History of the Governor General's Foot Guards* tells the story of a unit of the 4th Armoured Division in North-West Europe; *West Novas,* a history of the West Nova Scotia Regiment, is concerned mainly with the Italian campaign. The former is perhaps more complete as to detail and compilation; it is supplied, as well, with admirable reproductions of relevant maps, which are vital in works of this kind. *West Novas* is at fault in this respect: its only maps are reproductions of the small sectional maps actually used in action by the regiment, and as these are blurred and obscure, the reader must depend entirely on the text. Fortunately, this volume is written with perhaps greater clarity and command of the language than any other regimental history yet received. Each book is well supplied with photographs of unit officers and men in and out of action. These volumes are, of course, designed to appeal primarily to veterans of the units concerned, and as such they are quite satisfactory. The manifold activities in the Second World War of the Y.M.C.A. and the Salvation Army have also been recorded in two competently written volumes: *The Canadian Y.M.C.A. in World War II,* by Alan Hurst, and *Red Shield in Action,* by Scott Young.

Two personal accounts of war experiences have appeared, although neither is of the first rank. *Gate and Gaiters,* by Harry Catley, is an informal account of life in the Canadian Navy, as seen by an ex-Chief Petty Officer. The author has a quick eye for detail, and tells a story well; in fact, his book is largely a collection of anecdotes arising from the circumstances of Navy life, and the book's real humour will appeal to many readers. Occasionally Catley volunteers a comment on Navy traditions or organization: owing to his years of experience and a real affection for the service, he is neither excessively sentimental nor waspish, but instead he displays a candid yet tolerant understanding of the problems involved. Unfortunately, the book's style is often awkward and self-conscious, and this lack of literary finish is a serious defect. Jaunty illustrations by Pete Younger accompany the text. Peter Whalley's amusing illustrations for *Some of It was Fun,* by Wallace Reyburn, constitute this book's chief merit. Reyburn has whipped up a literary goulash for which the recipe appears to be: three parts war jokes, one part commentary on other war correspondents, and one part discussion of high-level politics in Yugoslavia. Many of the jokes are amusing, and the author's breezy journalistic style is most effective in this connection. The material on war correspondents and the conditions under which they worked is occasionally diverting, but veterans will soon recognize the presence of that delightful mirage which is the war correspondents' war, and which bears only a faint resemblance to the genuine article. This is a war of heady wines, and of beautiful women ("she was wearing a black silk dress that fitted her body tightly"); a war in which, inevitably, correspondents stroll about under fire, disdaining cover, while they secure information for the home-town paper from the sergeant who crouches in the ditch. The wonders of nature and of history are subjected to parallel distortions: Vesuvius reminds Reyburn of nothing so much as "a chocolate milkshake," and, although Pompeii earns Reyburn's approval, "historical ruins" generally are dismissed as "nothing more or less than a heap of stones." The author's remarks on Yugoslavian politics, finally, are notable only for their triviality, and would have been better omitted.

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CATLEY (HARRY), Gate and gaiters: a book of naval humour and anecdotes, including a glossary of naval language for the uninformed; ill. by PETE YOUNGER (Toronto, the author, 114 Roosevelt Rd., 322 pp., $3.50). HURST (A. M.), The Canadian Y.M.C.A. in World War II (Toronto, National War Services Committee of the National Council of Young Men's Christian Associations of Canada, 398 pp.). LAING (GERTRUDE), A community organizes for war: the story of the Greater Winnipeg Co-ordinating Board for War Services and affiliated organizations, 1939-1946 (Winnipeg, the Board; Council of Social Agencies, 460 Main St., 1948, 103 pp.). RADDALL (T. H.), West Novas: a history of the West Nova Scotia Regiment (Halifax, The Book Room, 349 Barrington St., 1948, 326 pp., ill., $4.00). THE R.C.A.F. OVERSEAS: the sixth year; with a foreword by the Honourable BROOKE CLAXTON (Toronto, Oxford, xii, 537 pp., $4.00). THE REGIMENTAL HISTORY OF THE GOVERNOR GENERAL'S FOOT GUARDS (Ottawa, Historical Committee, c/o Treasurer, Lieut.-Col. E. Lisle, 59 Finlay Ave., x, 267 pp.). REYBURN (WALLACE), Some of it was fun; ill. by PETER WHALLEY (Toronto, Nelson, 199 pp., $3.00). YOUNG (SCOTT), Red shield in action: a record of Canadian Salvation Army war services in the Second Great War (Toronto, Salvation Army, x, 150, xix pp.).

6. *Canada: The Land and the People* J. M. S. CARELESS

Examining the books of the past year that fall within this category inspires the thought, not wholly new, that the Canadian land wins far more attention than the Canadian people. Few books attempt to deal with the Canadians. Many describe the varied aspects of the setting in which they live. Yet among this latter group there are some which treat their particular portion of the Canadian scene with a warmth of understanding and a power of expression that perhaps convey more about the life of the country and the nature of its inhabitants, past or present, than many a general study of the Canadians might do. Nor are these works merely of regional or sectional significance; for only out of their sort of feeling for the local scene and local tradition can come the self-consciousness and historical sense which lie at the basis of any broader national viewpoint, Canadian or otherwise.

One of the most interesting of these regional books concerns the Pacific West, *The Valley of Youth* by Charles W. Holliday. Among other things, it is an account of the author's life in the Okanagan Valley at the turn of the eighteen-nineties, when the mountain-ringed parklands of the Okanagan were being opened to settlement, ranches, and orchards. Mr. Holliday was then a young emigrant from England, after two voyages around Cape Horn as an officer-apprentice in sailing ships. To him, this was truly the valley of youth, "where even our greybeards were young in spirit"—a land of spring, as he describes it, of constant freshness and sparkling beauty. This first book has many faults, as its author would be quick to recognize. It is almost shapeless. Mr. Holliday remarks in his preface that, if it is rambling, it reflects the rambling quality of life in the Okanagan at that time: a carefree wandering through the loveliness of the distant valley, deep in the British Columbian mountains. The work is full of digression and anecdote; but as its writer has a sharp sense of characterization and a happy touch of humour, these by-ways seldom become tedious. And since Mr. Holliday is an artist, as well as having engaged in many other pursuits, he shows a keen appreciation for the colours and vistas of the Okanagan. Yet perhaps the essential charm of the book lies in the translucent air of reverie that surrounds it. The author is one who has found his far-off valley, lived his dreams, and is happy in the memory of them.

Another work with the quality of reverie is Douglas Leechman's *Indian Summer,* brief sketches of a number of old Western Indians, with some of their folk-tales, by an anthropologist who has long known their people. This is another book that glances backwards, to the memories of an older race. It does not speak of the zest of spring but of the repose of age, of "old times that glow so softly through the calm autumnal haze of Indian summer." " 'Old times all gone. People forget. People don't care. Everything different now.' " So says one of Mr. Leechman's old Indians. But the author does care, and transmits the dreaming, nostalgic mood of a people in their Indian summer through an aptly titled and tenderly written little volume.

The region of the prairies is represented by *Blankets and Beads,* by James G. MacGregor. This is a history of the Saskatchewan River, or rather it is a collection of episodes in the history of the country traversed by that broad waterway. It is not a work of original research, and it would hardly meet the historian's requirements regarding organization and balance. Furthermore, it is published in rather dull, unattractive form. Nevertheless, the author's wide knowledge of his country and sure feeling for it illumine the book and keep up interest. In fact, this is regional historical writing of an encouraging sort, done by an amateur (in the original sense of the word) who has sought to orient himself in the past of the Saskatchewan area, and to make its present inhabitants conscious of their relation to its history and geography. Here the amateur has come closer to achieving these ends than professionals have often done.

Another book on a great western river is Leslie Roberts' *The Mackenzie*. This is a far more polished work, and is well presented as a member of the "Rivers of America" series, with most effective illustrations by Thoreau MacDonald. Both the illustrator and the author have felt and expressed the bleak immensity of their river-subject. Yet the book seems to suffer in a comparison with Mr. MacGregor's by reason of its very polish. This is the work of a professional publicist. It appears a bit glib. Though Mr. Roberts deftly weaves a number of somewhat extraneous stories into *The Mackenzie,* including the first Riel rising, the reader feels less convinced by the result than by the more artless, episodic book about the Saskatchewan.

On the eastern Arctic, Professor Nicholas Polunin, now of McGill University, presents in *Arctic Unfolding* a different type of work from those yet considered. It is a narrative of his experiences and observations during a Canadian airborne expedition to northern Ungava and the Arctic archipelago in the summer of 1946. An expert in the botany of Arctic and sub-Arctic regions, Dr. Polunin has published general books as well as learned treatises on his previous northern explorations. He brings to this volume not only the training of the scientific observer but a fund of literary ability, which makes *Arctic Unfolding* very enjoyable reading. "Popular science" has a degraded connotation; but in the sense that Dr. Polunin's book is soundly informative in its own field, is by no means written down, and yet makes clear the fascination which the Arctic can hold, this is popular science at its best.

From the Arctic to southern Ontario is a long leap. Yet Kenneth M. Wells's *By Moonstone Creek* has a persuasive charm in common with Dr. Polunin's work. Both men are enamoured of their subjects. They present them with an appeal that makes the reader want to see for himself the unknown and unbelieved Spicer Islands locked in ice-fields far above Hudson Bay, or—more feasibly—the friendly hills of Medonte, through which the little waters of Moonstone Creek find their way to Georgian Bay. Mr. Wells writes with a touch both light and lyrical of the progress of the seasons, the animals and pets, the homely pleasures and duties that make up life at the Owl Pen farm beside Moonstone Creek.

In one way, this is old stuff, back-to-the-land rusticating sentiment that has been done a million times before—and never can be done too often, if it is done well. And this is done well. There is a moving sensitivity in the book. Whether it be an essay on bees, an old farmer's tale, or the chronicle of a duck's amorous adventure, *By Moonstone Creek* evokes the Ontario countryside with an insight and emotion that belong more usually to the realm of poetry. Not that this is all unplanned prose-poetry. There is a degree of quotation from Robert Herrick which, while very apt, suggests a certain self-conscious effort to produce an Ontario idyll in the spirit of parson Herrick. Nevertheless *By Moonstone Creek* can fairly be termed a work infused with quiet natural beauty, which is further enhanced by the attractive wood-cuts of Lucille Oille, the author's wife.

In its own fashion, *Neighbourly News,* a collection of the broadcasts of the late Andy Clarke, C.B.C. reporter of local Ontario happenings, also evokes the atmosphere of rural Ontario. The "Mayor of Little Places" recorded for a large audience the sane and significant round of country life, the doings of the villages and small towns, the local marvels. And, as Gregory Clark says in his foreword to the book, "No matter what marvel was uncovered in Omemee, challenges of greater wonders came from Petrolia to Coboconk, from Moscow to Breslau (both Ontario)." This is a not unimportant social document: but beyond that, it makes delightful reading.

Historical themes in Ontario are dealt with in *Saint Ignace* by William Sherwood Fox and *Niagara Country* by Lloyd Graham. The former recounts in graphic style the interesting process whereby archaeologists have at last uncovered the lost site of St. Ignace, the Huron village where the Jesuit missionaries Brébeuf and Lalemant were martyred by the Iroquois in 1649. The latter book chiefly deals with the history of the American side of the Niagara frontier, but pays the Canadian side some attention, particularly in respect to border conflicts. Only the most sensitive descendant of the United Empire Loyalists could object to Mr. Graham's balanced treatment of these departed struggles; but more Canadians might feel that his genial (and very American) tolerance was proceeding too far when he avers that now 50 per cent of the people of Canada would approve of joining the United States.

Historical themes in the province of Quebec are treated in *Untold Tales of Old Quebec,* by E. C. Woodley, a well set-up volume of the stories and legends that are so thickly woven into the past of the old province. This is, on the whole, a pleasing adjunct to more formal Canadian history. Its contents, which concern many leading historical figures, are presented in colourful or even romanticized fashion. Yet sometimes it seems rather overwritten and artificial in tone. *Castle of Quebec,* by Joan Morgan, is another historical study, this time respecting the city of Quebec, or, more specifically, the two chateaux that have crowned the heights above the old town: the Chateau St. Louis, begun in 1647 and burned in 1834, and the present Chateau Frontenac, first opened in 1893. The ancient seat of French, then British, government and the C.P.R. hotel are obviously somewhat different quantities. It is not surprising, therefore, if with the second castle Miss Morgan's book seems to tail off somewhat into documentation from banquet menus and the hotel register. Still, the author makes clear the relations of both edifices to the city's history, and brings to the book careful research and a loving devotion to its theme.

Old Quebec, by Alexander D. Angus, is a more important work than either of the two preceding. An inviting piece of bookcraft, it is posthumously published. The author's death in an Air Force accident during the war seems a real loss to Canadian letters. *Old Quebec* expresses the history, the life, and the traditions of the French régime by means of brief studies of French sites and early buildings in the province—studies which are really constructed around a series of careful photographs taken by the author. The meaning of the work is well explained by its editor: "Although this book may be primarily considered as a valuable contribution to the history and archaeology of Canada, it is also a very beautiful memorial to its author, whose lifelong love and understanding of the Province of Quebec led him to spend so much time in the study of its ruins and relics."

Moving eastward to the maritime peninsula of Quebec, we may note *Gaspé,* by Blodwen Davies. This is another attractively published volume, and once again the illustrations, superb photographs, must be given a large share of credit. But the text is equal to the illustrations. This is another regional work which is striking in its feeling for the land and its people. The Gaspésians are not presented as quaint tourist attractions; the writer avoids the merely picturesque. There is a respect and sympathy for the fishing people, and an awed admiration for their world of "sea-carved coast" and almost unpenetrated mountains that comes out in powerful descriptive passages on the past and present in Gaspé.

In the Maritime Provinces proper, New Brunswick comes under attention through Esther Clark Wright's *The Saint John River*. The book travels up the Saint John from the Bay of Fundy. As it does, the history of each section of the river is brought in, with that wealth of family detail which properly belongs to an old province proud of its ancestry. The result is both good and bad. At times the work loses its force in small anecdote and a mass of minor people. At other times, the approach through individuals adds to the realism of the river's story. But here again is sound regional writing, based on an intimate knowledge of the area and successfully portraying the spirit of the well-developed community that has long inhabited the valley of the Saint John.

The books on Nova Scotia are of more restricted scope. *Glimpses of Halifax, 1867-1900,* a publication of the Archives of Nova Scotia prepared by Phyllis R. Blakeley, is full of interesting material on the old port city, often strongly tinged with local colour; but it is really a reference book with no particular theme other than the careful recording of a mass of information on the period dealt with. *The Church of Saint Paul in Halifax, 1749-1949,* by R. V. Harris is equally important as a source of information on the long history of the congregation of a leading Halifax church, a church of governors, warriors, and statesmen. It is more than that, however. It is the story of the oldest Protestant church in Canada—for Anglicanism, something close to a Canadian Canterbury in its influence. This story has been told with painstaking care.

The Irish in Nova Scotia, by H. L. Stewart, also deals with an old Halifax institution, the Charitable Irish Society, whose history it purports to relate from 1786 to 1836. This is a disappointing book. Besides being concerned with far less than the "Irish in Nova Scotia," it is concerned with less than a complete history of the Charitable Irish Society in Halifax. In fact, close to half of it is taken up with the old story of the Irish in Ireland. This is not said lightly, in any attempt to disparage the dark misfortunes in Irish history of the later eighteenth and earlier nineteenth century, which Mr. Stewart apparently feels deeply. But he really adds nothing new to the rehearsal of this subject, to which he gives his two longest chapters. Despite some effort, moreover, he does not effectively tie the Irish background into the history of the Nova Scotian society—which, indeed, as he points out, avoided explosive racial and religious issues. The real point of complaint, however, is that the story of the Charitable Irish Society suffers as a result, unless there was actually nothing more to tell. Although the Society is presented as an important instrument of social welfare, little is told of its charitable activities. The details are of constitutions, banquets, and toasts. The Charitable Irish Society, therefore, appears more in terms of social meetings than social work, of personalities (including that honorary Irishman, Joseph Howe) than of Nova Scotian social history.

A handsome little volume on Newfoundland completes this sea-to-sea regional survey. *This is Newfoundland,* edited by Ewart Young, packs many good things into small space, including E. J. Pratt's poem "Newfoundland" as prologue, a historical sketch, and an excellent series of photographs of island scenes—these together with a set of Yousef Karsh portraits of leading Newfoundlanders.

A few general works remain for examination in this category of Canada, the land and the people. They are of very different kinds. The first, *Unfold the Years,* by Mary Quayle Innis, is a history of the Young Women's Christian Association in Canada. Mrs. Innis brings literary experience and knowledge of the Y.W.C.A. to her task: she has, among other services, acted as editor of the Y.W.C.A. *Quarterly.* Her present book is a competent work of scholarship, a useful addition to the literature of social study in Canada.

The second book to consider is hardly a book by old definitions, but represents what may be a growing literary *genre,* the published radio script. This is a collection of such scripts by the well-known Canadian radio reporter, John Fisher. *John Fisher Reports* has the strength and weakness of its broadcasting form. The "essays" are short, thin, highly coloured, and presented in that stylized language which sounds better over the air than on the printed page: a mixture of clipped journalese and of flowery description that is almost embarrassing to read. History, too, may be distorted for the sake of effect. Who could truthfully visualize "Macdonald, J. A." (why this order?) raising "his great hulk of flesh" and letting "his paws hit the table at Charlottetown"? It sounds more like a Book-of-the-Month Club selection on Henry VIII than the wiry John A. Macdonald.

Yet on the balance these are minor faults. Mr. Fisher has overwhelming enthusiasm and an insatiable yearning to tell stories. Both emotions revolve about Canada. His enthusiasm carries one along in his zeal to know this country. One becomes caught up in his style, intrigued by it, even moved by it. He seems to find stories everywhere in Canada, and usually they are fresh and new. "I roam across this country," he says, "probing, portraying and prodding with but one purpose: to awake Canada to its true potential. . . . Each corner of Canada stabs my soul, for I am in love with the whole." Here, at last, is one Canadian who has reached beyond a regional consciousness to a national awareness, transcendental though it may be.

The third and final book in this category is a collection of essays by Hugh MacLennan, *Cross-Country,* all but one republished from periodicals. Their significance for the present purpose lies in the fact that in most of them Mr. MacLennan is dealing analytically with the subject which Mr. Fisher deals with emotionally and by indirection: that is, the Canadian national viewpoint, which both assume exists. Mr. MacLennan, however, as in his novels, goes well into the question by seeking to determine what marks off a Canadian from an American. Here he makes some stimulating suggestions, historically based, beyond the usual "Canadians are more conservative, etc. . . ." He sees one national common denominator, for instance, between the three separate groups which, he says, shaped the original psychology of Canada, the French, the Loyalists, and the Highland Scots. He notes that all three represented lost causes, groups who closed their ranks against "the humiliation of being discarded," who shared a cautious and restrained outlook and came to hold it, in particular *vis-à-vis* the United States.

Mr. MacLennan's analyses, however, cannot really be fairly presented in short space. One can only urge that his book be read. It is competently written, contains many more themes than can be suggested here, and above all it shows a maturity not only in Mr. MacLennan but in the stage of writing on Canada which now has been reached. No airy appraisals, no gloomy denials that Canada exists, but calm investigation of what phenomena are available. This, in fact, seems a good note for conclusion. Among the works of non-fiction on Canada of this year, regional or general, there is a recognition and understanding of what is actually to be found in the complex Canadian scene that is far more important and encouraging for the long run than any ardent desire to paint everything in hues of nationalism—whatever our national colours may be.

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7. *Remaining Books* THE EDITOR

Two memorial volumes will be mentioned first. *W. E. Saunders, Naturalist* has been produced by the Federation of Ontario Naturalists in honour of one of their number—a man who was, incidentally, a member of a distinguished Western Ontario family; his brother Sir Charles Saunders, was the developer of Marquis wheat. This brief book consists of appreciative essays by some of Mr. Saunders' friends, a bibliography of his numerous publications, and a few samples of the weekly articles on his hobby which he contributed to the *London Free Press* from 1929 until his death in 1943. The naïve outsider, who has always thought of naturalists as gentle souls, may be surprised by Mr. Saunders' enthusiasm for "collecting" rare birds with his gun and by his habit of casually producing a victim from his pocket at any odd moment, for example during a train journey, and proceeding to skin it. But then another gentle naturalist, Izaak Walton, said: "I am not of a cruel nature; I love to kill nothing but fish."

This for Remembrance, the other memorial volume, is of a different kind. Carlyle Allison, Editor of the *Winnipeg Tribune,* has brought together twenty-five brief essays by his father, the late W. T. Allison, who was Professor of English in the University of Manitoba and Literary Editor of the *Tribune* for more than twenty years. He had also followed an earlier profession: before he was a university teacher and a literary journalist he had been a Presbyterian minister. The signs of all three are to be found in these essays, for they are the direct and modest expressions of a man and his interests. The writer of the two pages about "Shadows on the Back Shed," for example, is first the newspaper columnist, at his ease with his readers, chatting about the colour of the shadows "on our back shed, late the other afternoon"; but soon the academic has turned the subject from painting to literature with appropriate quotations from Stevenson and Burke, and Shakespeare's "Life's but a walking shadow," after which it is not surprising that the former minister should call to mind and quote some shadow-passages in the Psalms, Isaiah, and the Song of Solomon. This is a book that will be particularly valued by all those who knew Professor Allison.

Robertson Davies, in *The Table Talk of Samuel Marchbanks,* is also the journalist at his ease, writing about himself and any other subject that may entertain his readers. In spite of the title, the arbitrary division into sections corresponding to the courses of a dinner, and some reference to fellow-guests, the book (it need hardly be argued) does not read like table talk: it might have been made up from several years' accumulation of daily half-columns by a journalist writing about this and that: a recent movie or play, the drama festival, Toronto *vs.* Montreal, "Of Short Skirts," "Of Ontario's Bacchic Refinement," "Of His Illiteracy," or "The Horrors of Gracious Living." Samuel Marchbanks is a man of the world and a jester living among thick-skulled Ontario philistines; he talks entertainingly, often wittily, to fill 250 pages on as many subjects. Probably he talks to keep himself company: there is never anyone else at that table except silent stuffed shirts and puzzled frumps. Perhaps *The Table Talk* is not quite up to the mark of the admirable *Diary of Samuel Marchbanks* of several years ago, but it is still a book for which we may be grateful: lively and humorous comment on our Canadian mores is a rare and valuable commodity.

Of *The County Kerchief* by Louis Blake Duff, I would only say that it is a two-hundred-page compilation (from literature, history, and the newspapers) of accounts of death by hanging—and I did not find the subject and the author's coy treatment of it anywhere near as fascinating as he apparently did.

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